

PERSONAL

In this 459th Report of the National Association for Really Triffic Standards we can reveal conclusively that comprehensive schools have failed and that grammar and independent schools are rather good. It must be made clear that this finding has been most disappointing to us, firstly because the National Association for Really Triffic Standards is a totally independent body with no axe to grind, and secondly because both co-authors, Fiona Fanny-Addam and Norbert Jekyll, frequently ask the chauffeur to point out comprehensive schools when we drive past.

What is more, our conclusions confirm those of other independent research bodies like the Foundation for the Timely Exposure of Really Dreadful Schools (TERDS). Reports from TERDS which corroborate our findings include "Why public schools are smashing: an objective appraisal" (Jekyll and Fanny-Addam, 1981) "How to bash your local comprehensive school: an objective appraisal" (Fanny-Addam and Jekyll, 1982) and "How the ILEA wastes public money: an objective appraisal" (Fanny-Addam, Jekyll and Hyde, 1983).

We are not suggesting for one moment that comprehensive schools are full of long-haired layabout Marx-

ist revolutionaries who should be beaten around the ears by angry parents. In any case that sort of thing is much better left to the police. We simply want to make the point that standards in comprehensive schools could be improved immeasurably if they were turned back into grammar and secondary modern schools.

Our study of comprehensive schools has produced some quite staggering evidence of the failure of the comprehensive system. The most sensational of these findings is that pupils with eight O levels had twice as many passes as those with four O levels, and what is worse, four times as many as those who had only passed two subjects. Thus children who passed three O levels obtained only half as many passes as those who got six O levels. When we looked at class size we found equally damning evidence. Supporters of trendy progressive educational ideas always argue that smaller classes and the employment of more teachers produce better academic results. When we compared grammar school A streams (average size 28 pupils) with comprehensive school remedial classes (average size 14 pupils) we found that the comprehensive school remedial class pupils obtained fewer Oxbridge Scholarships, fewer A levels, and were less



Ted Wragg

likely to become stockbrokers or work in a merchant bank than grammar school A stream pupils. This was despite the fact that the comprehensive school remedial class had a pupil-teacher ratio which was twice as favourable as the grammar school A stream, and thus proves conclusively that the provision of more teachers does not ensure better academic results.

Comprehensive schools in inner-city areas have been given a great deal of public money to provide specialist teaching for ethnic minority groups. When we studied the performance of

ethnic minority pupils in comprehensive schools, however, we found not only that they spoke English less fluently than pupils in less schools, but they were, grammar likely to be foreigners, much more

In some of our previous reports we have been quite unjustly criticised for bias and lack of rigour, but for this report we have collected a lot of data and worked out a series of correlation coefficients. Though we do ourselves actually understand the difference between a correlation and a regression, we have reproduced the computer printout in the appendices. Of course examination success at O level is not the only criterion by which schools should be judged, but the evidence from other examination results is also most alarming. When we compared the 11-plus success of pupils in grammar schools and comprehensive schools it was much more likely that grammar school pupils had passed the 11-plus than was the case in comprehensive schools. Indeed in most cases comprehensive school pupils had not even bothered to take it.

Similarly we found that the parents of pupils in independent schools were much more willing to pay fees than the

parents of pupils in comprehensive schools, and indeed to send their children on holidays to Crete, Hawaii or Acapulco, which shows conclusively the parental apathy induced by all-in state schools.

Our principal intention in producing this report is to expose the low standards in comprehensive schools and thus to give parents reliable and objective information, so that they can go to the head of their local comprehensive school and ask the sort of questions which all parents should ask, such as, when are you going to introduce the 11-plus, why are you letting class children allowed into this school, and are your revolutionary Marxist staff allowed to take O level tests.

In our last report, "The amazing success of prep schools: an objective appraisal" (Jekyll, Fanny-Addam, Pugh, Donald Duck, Tom and Jerry, 1982, press) we shall be combining the efforts of the National Association for Really Triffic Standards and TERDS to show how pupils at prep schools do better at Latin and classical analysis than pupils at maintained primary schools. Our readers can rest assured that we shall not cease to conduct objective enquiries into the failure of state schools.

Storm in a Thimble

Whiffs of sour grapes... waiting over the children's book world since the National Book League decided to replace their prestigious Children's Books of the Year exhibition with two rather different shows. Last week four leading children's book reviewers - Brian Alderson (The Times), Bob Leeson (Morning Star), Stephanie Nettell (The Guardian) and...

The other would be a serious adult exhibition for the trade, teachers and librarians, based on *The Signal Review*, started this year by the small, non-profit-making press run by Aidan and Nancy Chambers. The Thimble Press publishes children's book reviews and *Signal*, a journal designed books.

The *Review* was added to provide an annual round up of new books, with short notes by professionals - mainly teachers - and longer review articles by Elaine Moss and other respected critics. It's attractive, produced, with lots of pictures, and this year costs £2.50.

about the axing of a major national event without "public discussion" and handing over "the complex job of selecting and advising on children's books to an unrepresentative commercial operation."

It's all very odd when you remember that Brian Alderson wrote a devastating attack on the CBY show and catalogue in his paper some years ago (Bob Leeson came to its defence in a subsequent letter) saying that such an event should not be based on the personal choice of one person.

And it's even odder when you realise that the National Book League never took any part in the editing of the catalogue.

But with inflation and spending cuts, the price of the catalogue crept up and the numbers of buyers fell. This year Julia MacRae, its publisher, told the National Book League that the operation no longer made economic sense.

Reasonably enough, the NBL then decided to rethink the operation: as Elaine Moss regretfully says, a formula that worked when children's books were booming, and the NBL lived near Picaresque Circus rather than on a huge roundabout in Wandsworth, simply doesn't work now.

They decided to hold two exhibitions. One would be a children's summer fun show, run in cooperation with Wandsworth Borough Council.

The old exhibition had two components - the show itself, which displayed the chosen books with some razzamatazz to attract and entertain children, and the catalogue, with short descriptions of the books. In its heyday, the catalogue sold some 6,000 copies - mainly to libraries and teachers. The choice was a one-woman affair. Elaine Moss, who started it all in 1970, chose the books and wrote the catalogue, and three years ago handed over to Barbara Sherrard Smith, teacher-librarian at Bishop's Hatfield Girls School in Hertfordshire.

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as it seems

All for hanging a Wet

If Peter Brooke, the new junior minister for higher education, gets his way, visitors to his office are likely to be surprised by a portrait of that historic radical wet, Robert Owen.

Brooke admits that it is a bizarre choice for a good Thelwell, but the rationale behind his bid to borrow the picture from the National Portrait Gallery is that it was painted by his kinsman, the artist William Henry Brooke.

The exercise is in fact an attempt to keep up with his predecessor, William Waldegrave, who has removed his own stylish choice of office paintings (including a notable portrait of the first Earl Waldegrave) to take them to his new job at Environment.

He is clearly going to be a hard act to follow on the cultural front, never mind higher education, since he managed to negotiate the loan of paintings from the Tate Gallery Basement as well as the NPG, rather than relying on the usual Public Works issue. It is hardly very wonderful that he has now become government spokesman for the arts in the House of Commons.

The official line on this arrangement is that it is simply a matter of convenience; since the new arts minister, Lord Gower, is in the House of

Lords, and does not mean that the Department of the Environment is making a takeover bid for arts and libraries from the DES. There might have been some logic in this, since some three-fifths of the budget is spent by local authorities on their public libraries.

In fact, the 30-odd officials in the Office of Arts and Libraries are now awaiting transfer - with all their files - to an office complex near the Treasury (Government Offices, Great George Street), where they will be united with their minister, Lord Gower.

Private peace

We had hoped to report last Saturday's annual meeting of Teachers for Peace, the CND offshoot with around 1,000 members which is one of the chief protagonists in the debate about the place of peace studies in schools.

Sadly, our good intentions have been frustrated by the illness of Hilary Lipkin, teacher at Primrose Hill School in north London, told me that the press was banned from the meeting at Sir William Collins School.

But the press is very doubtful about the value of the press present, she said. "We've several things to discuss and having the press there will be inhibiting - no, totally disastrous. One of them is the press."

Miss Lipkin, who in response to my imprecations insisted she wasn't born yesterday, explained that newspaper habitually misrepresents and misrepresents the activities of the peace lobby.

"I don't think the press is constituted at present in all that a bad record of distorting and hissing facts," she added.

No doubt she is not one in her views. Sir Keith Joy, for one, cannot have been buying with good humour after finding comments on physics and sociology collected under the zingy heading "ear free". But, to keep exams on trying to enlighten us, TFP.



Local hero... Darshan Bhullar, a product of Harehills Middle School, Leeds, and currently with the London Contemporary Dance Theatre, is returning to his old school with a £200 Arts Council grant to choreograph a ballet for them. Darshan was the first of 10 professionals to emerge from the school's policy of compulsory dance lessons for all the 500 pupils.

Their dance teacher, Mrs Nadine Senior, says: "He was good enough to be a professional footballer and when he became a dancer, that made it all right with the other lads. He always comes back to teach when he is in Leeds and all the kids adore him."

Picture: Sally Soames

Blacks accuse ILEA of racist staffing practice

by Diane Spencer

Black teachers meeting in London this week accused the Inner London Education Authority of racist staffing practices, and drew up proposals for reform.

The ILEA, which has just launched a big initiative to promote equality and counter racism in schools, was accused by Ms Natasha Sivanandan, conference coordinator, of "prattling on about multicultural education while it ignores its racist practices against its own employees".

The conference, attended by nearly 400 people at Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton, on Monday, was organized by the Hackney Black Teachers Group with the approval of the ILEA Inspectorate, and sponsored by the Inner London Teachers Association (the ILEA branch of the National Union of Teachers).

The teachers allege that:

- Almost all supernumerary teachers in the authority are black;
- Few rise beyond scale 2 or 3 although their qualifications are above average;
- They have to wait longer than white teachers for assigned posts for promotion;
- They have difficulty in completing their probation because they are moved from school to school and kept on supply;
- They are often passed over for promotion in favour of younger, less well qualified white teachers.

Proposals for reform included a new organization for black teachers to monitor progress; call for the abolition of supernumerary posts; automatic transfer to scale 2 after four years' teaching; and a national register black teachers.

ILEA education officer, Mr William Stubbs, has agreed to meet a deputation.

Comfort on l.e.a. spending

Sir Keith Joseph, Education Secretary, found some crumbs of comfort in the report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate on the effects of local authority spending policies on the education service which was published this week.

The report (summarized on page 10) says that after the swingeing spending cuts of 1981, "the pace of deterioration in provision has at least been slowed" in 1982. But it notes

many deficiencies, not least a narrowing of the curriculum at primary and secondary level, which cannot be ignored.

Sir Keith acknowledged HMI's concern but pointed out that the report revealed "many satisfactory features on which we can build."

He also echoed the report's assertion that "there is no simple relationship" between spending and educational quality.

Haringey set for best deal on maternity

by Hilary Wilce

Teachers in Haringey are poised to get the best maternity and paternity deal in the country.

A settlement already agreed by NALGO offers a total of 63 weeks maternity leave to all full-time women employees, no matter how short a time they have worked. Paternity leave is two weeks on full pay, and if both partners work for Haringey the father can take any maternity leave unused by the mother.

Women can return to their full-time job on a part-time basis if they wish, and will be considered for jobs on a preferential basis for up to five years after taking maternity leave.

Mr Tony Leoney, chief education officer, said he expected teachers to be offered a similar deal to NALGO workers.

The majority of women teachers in the country are eligible for 40 weeks maternity leave after working for two years. A few authorities such as Nottingham and the Inner London Education Authority offer better provision.

Staffroom 'shadows' plan to assess new recruits

by Richard Garner

Every new teacher will be attached to a senior colleague in the staffroom who will assess his or her progress, under a plan to be unveiled by local authority leaders today.

The Big Brother/Big Sister figure would monitor the performance of new recruits and make a report after three years which could lead to dismissal.

Under the plan, each teacher would spend the three years on an entry grade - during which his or her performance would be closely monitored by a senior colleague appointed as a mentor.

New teachers' contracts could include a clause which would give l.e.a.s the right to sack them after 3 years if they fail their assessment.

"In practice, in primary schools, the mentor would be an experienced successful teacher, perhaps the head or deputy in smaller schools and in secondary schools the mentor might be the head of department or second-in-command," it adds.

The mentor would assess the teacher's performance - although teachers should have a right of appeal against any unfavourable interim or final assessment and an opportunity to make a case for an extended entry period or request for a change of school.

Only those teachers who demonstrated career potential would pass on to a newly set up "main professional grade" - which would have a maximum salary of just above the present scale 2 maximum (£9,132 a year).

The paper for today's meeting says there would have to be provision for increments to be withheld from teachers on this grade whose performance was "unsatisfactory." However,

so far the local authorities have not tabled their proposals for assessment.

The paper is bound to cause an outcry from teachers' leaders who, as reported in *The TES*, are ready to consider the idea of an entry grade, but believe the majority of teachers should progress automatically to the main grade. However the NAS/UWT is prepared to "talk turkey" about the proposals if the main grade salary levels are high enough.

The paper says that many teachers given an unfavourable assessment will leave the service "voluntarily", but adds: "Creation of a category of 'second class' teachers is unacceptable."

"New teachers' contracts might make express provision for removal in such circumstances. Naturally, employing authorities would expect to consider alternative employment but if this is not available or is rejected dismissal must follow."

Meanwhile, teachers' leaders and local authority representatives have agreed to draw up a comparability paper to help them with their deliberations during next year's negotiations.

At a private meeting on Monday, the teachers submitted a paper saying that the salaries of teachers should be compared to other similar professions - including those of further education lecturers who at present earn substantially more than primary and secondary school teachers.

In addition, any study should compare salaries at different ages - 21-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44 and on retirement.

In their paper the local authorities warn they would want to consider the current and future demand for teachers in a contracting profession - and the supply of unemployed teachers available.

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Still more for Oliver

The rise and rise of Sir Keith Joseph's young protégé, Oliver Letwin, continues. Though he has returned to the DES after the election with his minister as special adviser, 27-year-old Letwin will in future be spending more of his time at 10 Downing Street, where he is to join the Prime Minister's personal policy unit.

No doubt he has been taken on by

Mr Thatcher on the strength of glowing recommendations from Sir Keith, who recruited him for the education brief at the Tory research department a year ago after noting his remarkable promise during visits to his distinguished academic patrons.

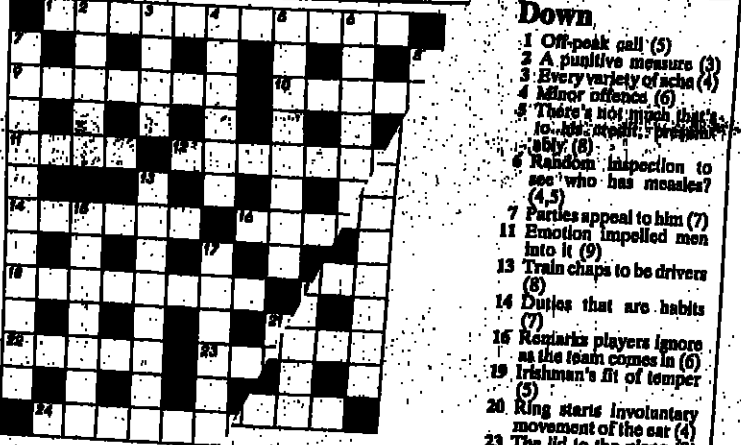
At that time, his own experience was limited to academic research, after Eton and a philosophy degree at Trinity College, Cambridge - none of which had prepared him for the culture shock when he first went into inner London comprehensives to find out what state education was all about.

That particular tour was apparently

just as breathtaking for the teachers visited as it was for the high-flying Letwin, and was only equalled in its effect by a subsequent foray to look at the quality of teacher training establishments.

He insists cheerfully now that the critics made of his outspoken reaction were most unfair, since he had tried very hard to be tactful. Still, his lively and questioning mind is still clearly very much to Sir Keith's taste, and the grey corridors of Elizabeth House have done nothing to dampen that engaging freshness. Can he have the same catalytic effect on Downing Street as he had on the teacher-training colleges?

No 110 CROSSWORD by Rufus



Across

1 Deliveries that are not for Americans (7)

2 Cook beats a mixture of national confidants (9)

3 Soundless note (2)

4 Throat (4)

5 Bob leaves in (3-3)

6 Study for (4)

7 A new paper to be published (6)

8 It comes trouble as an item of luggage (8)

9 Roland to leave something out (4)

10 Having nothing we must be in the red (3)

11 Thoughtful old fashioned about it (9)

12 A demonstration, and what is wrong about it (3-2)

13 Money that's not well earned (4-3)

Down

1 Off-pink call (5)

2 A punitive measure (3)

3 Every variety of ache (4)

4 Leftist offence (6)

5 There's not much that is not as simple as possible (8)

6 Random inspection to see who has measles? (4,5)

7 Parties appeal to him (7)

8 Emotion impelled men to it (9)

9 Train clips to be driven (8)

10 Dishes that are habits (7)

11 Tennis players ignore as the team comes in (6)

12 Irishman's fit of temper (5)

13 King starts involuntary movement of the ear (4)

14 The lid to the puzzle (3)

Solution to puzzle no 109

Across

1 DELIVERIES

2 BEATERS

3 SOUNDLESS

4 THROAT

5 BOB

6 STUDY

7 NEWSPAPER

8 TROUBLE

9 ROLAND

10 NOTHING

11 THOUGHTFUL

12 DEMONSTRATION

13 MONEY

Down

1 OFF-PINK

2 PUNITIVE

3 ACHES

4 LEFTIST

5 SIMPLE

6 MEASLES

7 APPEALS

8 EMOTION

9 TRAIN

10 DISHES

11 TENNIS

12 IRISHMAN

13 KING

14 LID



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'... but greenly in hugger-mugger ...'

The speed with which the Secretariat of the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers has put forward proposals (page 6) on the criteria for teacher training, and how to monitor them, has taken many by surprise. The ACSET secretariat, in this context, means the Department of Education and Science and Her Majesty's Inspectorate. For some months before the publication of the *Teaching Quality White Paper*, the Inspectorate had been taking soundings on the basis of an earlier discussion paper – the document which highlighted questions about subject-specific forms of training and signified the main lines on which the Secretary of State's professional advisers believed that teacher training should be tightened. A series of visits by HMI to university departments of education, polytechnics and colleges extended the range of anecdotal evidence at the disposal of the inspectors and helped to acclimatize the teacher trainers to the notion that more intervention was on the way.

On the basis of these and other contacts, formal and informal, HMI (and their DES colleagues) have now laid a cuckoo's egg in ACSET's nest in the shape of 'advice to the Secretary of State on criteria for the approval of initial training courses and on mechanisms for accreditation'.

ACSET is accustomed to being manipulated ruthlessly by officials and HMI. Never has it been asked by the DES to act more like an echo chamber than this week. Instead of an open and wide-ranging discussion about matters of fundamental importance to the teaching profession at every level, there has been a sequence of hugger-mugger discussions and deals. A few months after the White Paper, an attempt is made to rush ACSET into acting as the DES's stalking horse, as if to show the Manpower

Services Commission is not the only body which can act with indecent haste.

There are two parts to the task which ACSET has to tackle. First, there are the criteria for teacher training on which Sir Keith has asked ACSET to advise. The HMI draft is a strange mixture of bland and unexceptionable generality and what one incensed university teacher trainer called "intellectually insulting detail". There are obvious difficulties in defining what should be considered a "criterion", and what should be subsumed within "advice", "guidelines", "discussion documents" or such other "handbooks of suggestions" as HMI, or anyone else, might care to offer to the universities and the colleges about how they should conduct their affairs.

There is a need to make the distinctions clearer and to restrict the criteria to those essential requirements which can properly be laid down from the centre. Any temptation to stray into detail must be resisted. There is the obvious danger of inviting the same trouble as that generated in the United States where attempts to lay down clearer guidelines opened up the way for every pressure group seeking to saddle the teacher trainers with additional demands.

In the latest proposals policing the criteria is to be the responsibility of a new accreditation council, nominated by the Secretary of State and composed of one-third teacher trainers, one-third teachers and one-third I.E.A.s. representatives.

With an independent chairman and its own secretariat (but receiving heavy guidance from HMI who will spend a good deal of time in and out of UDE's and colleges) this body will act as the "transitory mechanism" of professional accreditation alongside such other agencies as may exist for

academic validation (the universities, the CNAAP). In such circumstances the threat of much increased red tape is obvious, especially where the universities are concerned.

No matter how carefully ACSET is manipulated, the politics of the exercise are painfully clear and there is no reason why they should not be argued out *en clair* instead of in the discreet codes preferred by HMI. The policy-makers have to steer between Scylla and Charybdis. Scylla is the Secretary of State, highly critical of teachers and even more so of teacher trainers, and determined to shake things up for the better. Charybdis is the teaching profession and the need to keep in view the aims of true professionalism which cannot in the long-run be fostered by the iron bureaucratic control of the DES, even if it is hidden in the velvet glove of an accreditation council.

The policy-makers have to put forward a scheme which looks sufficiently technocratic and centralist to satisfy Sir Keith's distrust of the existing education establishment, but which has also some elements of corporate independence (an independent chairman, its own secretariat) which might (conceivably) be seen as having within it the seeds of a General Teaching Council and genuine self-government for the teaching profession.

The need for haste is understandable. With luck the quickness of the hand may deceive the eye. On the most charitable construction it may be that this imperfect compromise is the best that can now be negotiated and may still be turned to advantage in the course of time by ingenious administrators. Others will not be so sanguine, believing that the proper way to deal with issues of this importance is by open debate – the open debate which is being so carefully forestalled on this occasion.

Second opinion

Appointing heads without fuss

In 1953 I was appointed to my first headship – to a tiny Yorkshire grammar school. The first stage of that process was an appointment with Frank Barraclough who spent half an hour informally chatting to me. It reminded me of my scholarship interview at Cambridge.

Subsequently I had a conventional interview with the governors and was duly appointed. Frank Barraclough offered his congratulations and said: "Go away and get on with the job, and I don't want to hear from you".

Things have changed. Schools have become larger and much more diverse. The standards demanded by society have become higher at all levels of attainment. Thirty years on heads are faced with a more demanding job. A selection process therefore which looks in an apparently casual way for shared assumptions is hardly enough. But the vital point about my selection was that the chief education officer in person spent time with me and thereby signalled his belief that my appointment was of great importance; and he subtly made clear the criteria by which he was judging that particular school. These are still the crucial issues.

What is so worrying about the Open University report on the selection of secondary heads is the evidence that in some authorities nobody has identified what qualities need to be sought for a particular appointment; nor by what deliberate process candidates shall be tested for those qualities.

The cause for concern is not just that these failures of procedure may have resulted in inappropriate appointments. Predictably those writers in the press who seize every opportunity to air their prejudices rushed to proclaim that this accounted for "all those incompetent heads". No doubt schools, like all other institutions, have their range of good, bad and indifferent people in charge. No doubt bad appointment procedures sometimes still pick out good candidates. But the point is that candidates are insulated if they are given no proper chance to become informed about the nature of the school for which they are applying, where it stands and where it means to go; and if those to whom they will be responsible present themselves as disorganized, insensitive, and unable to convey clearly their own concerns and hopes for the school in question.

Another change is that elected members seem less inclined to rely upon the judgment of their professional servants. Nor, apparently, do they approve the idea of inviting on to the appointing body an experienced head of known competence from their own or another authority. It is suggested in the OU report that this may be because of power structures and personal ambitions to look important. No doubt this is part of the difficulty.

In some cases also, perhaps, there has been a loss of confidence among elected members, whereby, instead of trusting their servants to serve them, they have come to feel that they may be plotting behind their backs and frustrating their intentions.

Insofar as that is true, it is very sad. But it only reinforces the need for the particular heads of appointing heads to be looked at rationally by all, concerned, and for sensible and agreed procedures to be worked out well beforehand and between all parties who ought properly to be involved, so that when the moment comes for the procedure to be set in motion, there will then be no room for unseemly wrangling.

Donald Frith

Donald Frith retires shortly as secretary of the Secondary Heads Association.

EOC probe finds no sex bias in appointments to Coventry school

by Hilary Wilce

A four-year investigation into appointments at a Coventry school has found no evidence of unlawful sex discrimination, despite complaints from a third of the staff.

But in a finding which has implications for all schools and authorities the report pin-points the failure of the school to observe correct appointments procedures as being the main cause of "the widespread belief among staff at the school that there has been discrimination against women."

A formal investigation into appointments and promotions at the Sidney Stringer School and Community College was launched by the Equal Opportunities Commission in 1979 after a letter from 40 of the 120 staff complaining that able women candidates for promotion had been the victims of sex discrimination. The letter also alleged that the headmaster was prejudiced against women.

The Commission investigated allegations that the head had asked whether a woman candidate for a senior post was likely to become emotional under stress, and that he had implied he thought women unsuitable for senior posts. It also looked at evidence from a meeting of house heads where the headmaster had been accused of male chauvinism.

If found that allegations of a discriminatory attitude were not substantiated, although "remarks which could be taken as offensive were made to women teachers on a number of occasions by senior male staff at the school".

The report examined in detail the appointment of a maths co-ordinator, of the deputy head of the 16-plus centre, and of the senior counsellor/adult education officer.

The only finding of potential discrimination was that the job of senior counsellor was designed in such a way as to be unfair to male applicants.

The job of counselling girls was a senior teacher post while the job of counselling boys was a scale 2 post.

"In practice, the effect of the attachment of the relatively minor responsibility for counselling girls (perceived as only a Scale 2 responsibility in relation to the counselling of boys) was effectively to prevent the advertisement from being an open one and to deter male applicants from applying for a senior management position in the school," the report says.

However it notes that many of the appointments at Sidney Stringer during the period under investigation were made by the head without the governors playing their full role, and without adequate records being kept.

This might well have led observers to believe that "decision were being made in a secretive and irregular manner", the report says.

It recommends that formal appointment and promotion procedures be adhered to, and that school staff should be given a clear explanation of the procedures and the criteria used for designated posts of responsibility.

Mr Arlon Jones, head of Sidney Stringer school, said he thought it ironic that "after so much time, money and pain" the only instance of discrimination the commission managed to find was against men. In general the findings of the commission confirmed "everything I have been saying all along".

A spokeswoman for the EOC said the investigation had taken so long partly because of the unwieldy nature of formal investigation procedures and partly because of the large number of people involved in the complaint.

The only other formal investigation in the field of education that the commission has carried out was into schools in Tameside in 1977. This also failed to find any evidence of unlawful sex discrimination.

Formal Investigation Report: Sidney Stringer School and Community College, Coventry E3.00 EOC, Overseas House, Quay Street, Manchester.

Fifteen opt for 12-month job swap

by Nick Wood

Fifteen Suffolk teachers have volunteered to swap jobs for a year in a bid to widen professional experience and improve promotion prospects.

The teachers, from primary, secondary and special schools, will pay their existing salaries when the scheme starts next term.

Mr Howard Bottomley, principal assistant education officer, said: "At a time when there are fewer opportunities for promotion because of falling rolls and some staff are staying longer in scale one and scale 2 posts, this is an opportunity to extend their experience. It's a form of staff development."

Mr David Greenacre, a scale two teacher responsible for science, technology and computing at Cliff Lane primary school in Ipswich, will be taking part in a triangular switch with two women teachers at nearby junior schools.

He confessed to feeling "a bit stale" after eight years at the same school, and hoped the change would bring him into contact with new methods of teaching and management.

Study of London primaries to examine low achievement

by Sarah Bayliss

Primary schools in the Inner London Education Authority are to be scrutinized in an inquiry under Mr Norman Thomas, former chief inspector for primary education and the man responsible for the HMI primary survey of the late 1970s.

The inquiry, to start work next term, will examine curriculum and organization, and has a special remit to look at underachievement among working class children in the capital. It is part of the ILEA's wider campaign for promoting equal opportunities in schools; hitherto that has focused on low achievement among secondary age girls, working class and ethnic minority children.

The authority, which has roughly 800 primary schools and 140,000 primary age children, is launching the study against what it calls a "positive background"; unlike the secondary review, it has not been promoted by high truancy rates and classroom difficulties.

A report to the schools sub-committee yesterday said the intention was to review on certain schools which had been "exceptionally successful" in tackling the problems of low achievement. The intention was to collect a



The skeleton of a large flesh-eating dinosaur, (thought to have looked something like the picture above), has been excavated from a claypit in Surrey by experts from the Natural History Museum. The first bone to be found was the disproportionately huge clawbone (left) which is more than a foot long. It is at least half as long again as the biggest clawbone on the hind foot of *Tyrannosaurus*, and can only have belonged to an unknown species.

NAB recommends 7 per cent reduction

After discussion with Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, last week, the National Advisory Body has decided to recommend a 7 per cent reduction in student admission for advanced further education next year. This means a cut of 5,000 in the number of entrants.

Funds are being cut rather more – 10 per cent – and this means that spending per student will fall by 13 per cent.

More resources for public sector colleges and polytechnics were among the central demands by a majority at the

CLEA conference in Canterbury last week.

The motion, proposed by Wakefield said: "CLEA reiterates its support for the work of the National Advisory Body and emphasizes that its encouraging degree of progress towards a resolution of the problem of maintaining a service of quality with genuine access for potential candidates can be maintained and developed only if there is to be an acknowledgment by the Government of the need to support a realistic level of funding."

Mr John Pearman, chairman of education in Wakefield, said the NAB was now in the same position as the American colonists at the time of the revolution. The NAB's slogan was: "No rationalization without more resources."

The difference in funds available for each student in a university compared with a polytechnic was unacceptable. Mrs Josie Farrington, chairman of Lancashire's education committee said: "Parity of esteem must be maintained across the binary line."

Conference report, page 5

Helping the aged

Dunston Riverside primary school in Galeshead has won first prize of £1,000 in a national scheme designed to promote better communications between the young and the elderly.

Under the scheme, organized by Help the Aged and financed by the Legal and General, about 100 schools ran projects in which children worked side by side with old-age pensioners in the classroom. At Dunston Riverside about 70 children were involved in craft-work projects with up to a dozen old-age pensioners.

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Liverpool indictment

The HMI report on the Liverpool Institute High School (page 8) is an appalling indictment. Ironically this, the most devastating report so far published, chronicles the tribulations of a grammar school, not one of those dreadful comprehensives. This may explain why only *The Times* and the *Guardian* devoted much space to it on Wednesday (though the *Sun* managed a wry reference to the miserable state of music in George Harrison and Paul McCartney's old school).

It is eminently right that this has now been brought into the open and that publication should be accompanied by yet another stiff letter from Sir Keith to Liverpool. The blame can be distributed widely – too widely to stick, perhaps. Liverpool's long-drawn out political wrangling, with long periods without a clear majority party, have contributed to the failure to adopt and carry through a secondary reorganization plan. No fewer than six proposals for the school's future have been turned down by the DES. A succession of administrative heads have plagued the Liverpool education office since the new authority came into being after the local government reforms of 1973.

When uncertainty and indecision become a way of life it is easy for schools to run down – appointments are delayed or never made; repairs are stopped, because the building may have no future; the failure of the politicians and the administration translate into failures of management and planning at the level of the individual school.

The culpability of the Liverpool authority is obvious. However the members and the schools governors may try to shift the blame, it is the school which has been allowed to



Liverpool: political wrangling.

deteriorate, their pupils who have suffered. It would be pleasant to believe that the professional devotion of the teaching staff made up for shortcomings elsewhere, but the HMI report gives little support to such a view.

But what of the Inspectorate itself? It would be interesting to know for how long the HMIs have known about the state of this school and what they have done about it till now. And the DES? Is it not the job of the Secretary of State to step in earlier when an authority is falling down on its responsibilities?

Now Liverpool has a majority party in charge, a reorganization scheme will be pushed through as fast as possible. But the needs of the Liverpool Institute pupils cannot wait for that: the new head who takes up his job in September will have his work cut out to make an impact, immediately in a school which must be shell-shocked.

Agenda for partnership

The agenda for partnership which Sir Keith Joseph promised last week's CLEA conference – though greeted with not unreasonable scepticism by delegates who swiftly remarked on its incompatibility with support grants, rates ceilings and contempt for consultation – was encouraging enough to deserve a welcome: the tone, at least, was more buoyant.

The Education Secretary does seem to have listened to those who have drawn attention to his leadership role in the education service. Though his actual agenda contained few new ingredients beyond those already regularly prescribed by Sir Keith, his audience went away impressed by some evidence of a more positive recognition of the need to work with them and appreciate their difficulties.

It goes without saying that this is important, since so many of the items at the top of Sir Keith's list demand the cooperation of his local authority partners if they are to improve the performance of the service.

He took a tentative line, for example, on the matter of getting teachers' pay and promotion to regular assessment of performance, so that bright young teachers may progress more rapidly and mature classroom teachers reap their due reward without moving into management. (He didn't even mention firing the duds.) This has been on the agenda, of course, for years. Perhaps he now expects to prod the I.E.A.s and the unions into action at last.

Does the new partnership concept signal a willingness to cut through the Burnham cackle and put the same weight behind teacher assessment policies as is now being used to push *Teaching Quality* proposals? If so, it is to be hoped that suitable advice will

also commend to him more foolproof methods than the self – peer group, and even pupil assessment that he subsequently floated as possibilities.

Some of the same provisions might be made on what he had to say about the selection, training, and performance of heads – a preoccupation of the conference as well as of (currently) the Department of Education and Science. But many thoughtful members of the education service, at the CLEA conference and outside it, now believe it essential to move beyond the mystic link between a head's charisma and the school achievement. Better management would not isolate such factors as the head's performance from those of the supporting staff.

Sir Keith had a strong point to make about the unexploited potential for good of the advisory service, stating his intention to explore with the local authority associations ways in which to use advisers to raise standards.

As he said, the role of local advisers is not always appreciated, least of all, perhaps, by county treasurers in search of cuts to meet Department of Environment limits. There is now growing disquiet that the local advisory service is failing to provide the support needed by schools on curriculum, reorganization, redeployment and administration, largely because its numbers are being cut, but also for lack of guidance about objectives.

Sir Keith's expressed interest in the importance is therefore welcome, as is his newly declared belief in joint action with the local authorities. The proof of the pudding should shortly be evident in his reaction to the uneven picture of barely adequate provision provided by HMI's latest cuts report.

NO COMMENT

"Comments in the Real World" (not Scotland). From a list of BBC programme for schools 1983-84.

PLATFORM

Anne Sofer examines the main proposals for a revised ILEA constitution and suggests a directly elected ingredient for a democratic and effective authority.

Trying to set out the ideal constitution for the Inner London Education Authority feels almost like planning for a post-war society when the war is just beginning. Inside County Hall, the campaign to save the GLC and to fight off the Government's plans to cap the rate generates a greater feeling of urgency than any thinking about the next step. It even perhaps to the most avid campaigners, feels like an admission of defeat before they've started.

Yet, setting the GLC issue and the rate-capping threat to one side for a moment (and that is a huge mental effort), the Conservative manifesto statement on the future of the ILEA is in one sense a victory for the defenders of the authority. There is no mention of transferring control to the individual boroughs; and the dismemberment of the authority which was such a nightmare prospect a few years ago, thus appears to have been abandoned. It is probably not going to be a "Save ILEA" affair after all - with all the banners and badges and protest marches we had last time. We are going to keep the single, united authority we fought for.

That being so, it is possible to think positively about a different constitution. I have never thought the existing one perfect anyway. So why not go back to fundamentals and get it right this time? The ILEA will always be anomalous, but it ought at least to fulfil basic criteria that can be applied to local government, and the administration of education within it, in the British system generally.

What are those criteria? I think there are three main ones.

● First, the authority's constitution should be democratic and representative.

● Second, it should be such as to encourage people to stand who have the time, commitment and understanding to do it properly.

● Third, it should relate the activities of education closely to provision of other services, both to the needs and interests of the community.

The ILEA is composed of the 35 GLC members returned for the Inner London constituencies (who are automatically and compulsorily members of the ILEA and its education committee), and one member nominated by each borough council and the City. That makes another 13, so there are 48 members in all - plus another 17 co-opted members on the Education Committee.

On the three criteria the present system scores 'yes, but with reservations' on all three.

The system is democratic - indeed more so than all other education authorities where the education committee is selected from among elected councillors, not directly elected as most ILEA members are - but it is no more representative than any other 'first past the post' system. It has the added minor disadvantage of being elected partly at the GLC elections and partly at the borough elections a year later, and it is possible that the issues of control and accountability get clouded in the electors' perceptions.

Similarly, it does produce committed education committee members - but only some. Members who carry

heavy GLC responsibilities rarely put in more than a token appearance, and considering that each constituency has an average of 30 odd schools, plus assorted institutions of continuing, further and higher education, (and that is before boundary reorganization), that leaves an uncomfortable number of gaps.

Finally, although all members of the ILEA are members of other authorities and can therefore fulfil my third criterion to some extent, in the case of the GLC members the link is not particularly relevant. The coordination between (for instance) the fire brigade or London Transport and education is not such as to need a significant political input.

It is the social services' and the community services' links with education which are important, and at present it is only the single member from each borough who can provide this. There is also the consideration that these are the only members of the ILEA who have that sobering experience of adding up the various demands for services, dividing the total among their ratepayers, and sending out the bills.

So what other suggestions are there for a new ILEA constitution? The two main alternative proposals under discussion at present each fail at least one of the criteria - although they may be much more satisfactory than the present system on others.

The solution apparently favoured by the Government, the joint committee composed of five councillors from each borough, fulfils the third criterion perfectly but it is far from satisfactory on the other two. It would produce an authority only indirectly elected by the people of London and far more susceptible to the charge of remoteness than at present.

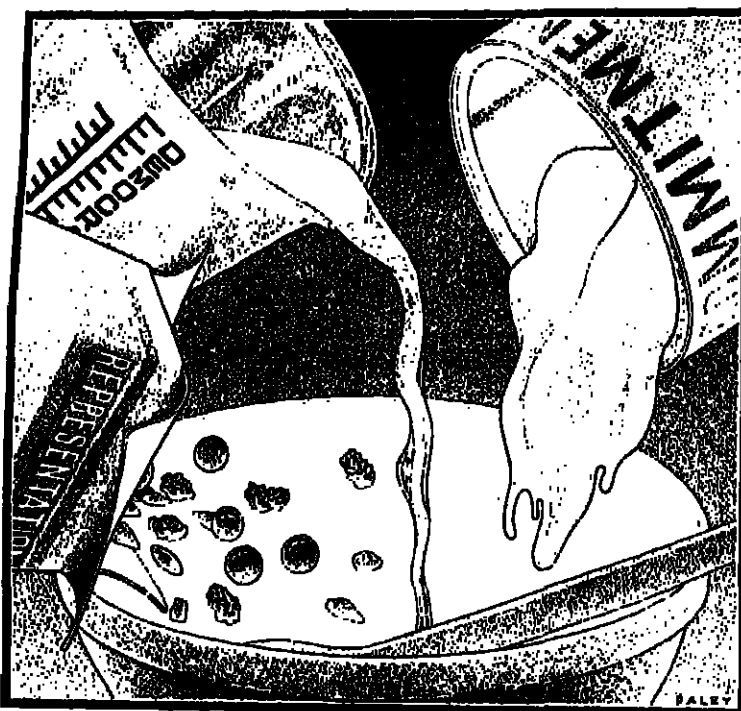
There is the additional problem of how, in what is becoming a three-party system, the five seats are to be shared out between the political parties.

Labour and Labour parties having a drink together, or through a formula applied to the number of seats won, or votes cast?

Doubts have also been raised, as to whether such a constitution would fulfil my second criterion. At present a number of people stand for the GLC with their eyes chiefly on the ILEA, prepared, if they get in, to devote themselves to it more or less full-time.

Such people would probably not, it is argued, embark on the much more chancey borough route. At present the ILEA meets during the day, and its very active members (and I cannot imagine there ever being fewer than a dozen) have to devote their whole energies to it. Very few people stand for the borough council with that sort of time commitment in mind. And if members of education committees in other parts of the country are tempted to snort a bit at that, I think they have to remember that the ILEA is a uniquely large, complex, and publicly exposed organization.

The other proposal, strongly supported by the Conservatives on the ILEA, is the completely separate, directly elected education authority. To education-lovers this is an immensely attractive proposition, but it



A new recipe for inner London

probably carries the "uniqueness of London" argument too far for the Government, or indeed the other local education authorities, to swallow. It also totally fails the third criterion listed above, severing even the single link with each borough the existing borough members provide.

I think there is a way of fulfilling all three criteria, and would like now to propose it. It requires a little lateral thinking and the creation of an entirely new kind of representative. Because such creatures seem to have a better survival rate with a pronounceable acronym, I will call it a Borough and Education Authority Member, or BEAM.

The BEAM would be directly elected, at the same time as the borough council elections are held, to sit both on the borough council and on the ILEA. The ballot paper would be divided into two sections (or there first the voters would choose their ward councillors, in the second their BEAM).

The ILEA would thus consist entirely of BEAMs, who were both directly elected and members of their borough councils. They would be full members of their borough councils, and would vote and serve on commit-

tees in the normal way, though they would not represent an individual ward. They would also, of course, all be full voting members of the ILEA.

I can think of three ways in which BEAMs could be elected - and there could be more. Once the principle is accepted that the election of such additional councillors would be both feasible and useful, all sorts of ingenious and innovative proposals might surface.

The first proposal is the simplest. There would be one BEAM for each parliamentary constituency. This would (on the new boundaries) mean a very much smaller education authority - 29 members (two for some boroughs and three for others).

Such a small authority would need to co-opt to a considerable degree to its education committee and sub-committees; this might make possible the "internalizing" of many of the consultative procedures of the authority, with parents, teachers, and ethnic minority representatives, in larger numbers as formally co-opted members of the authority's structure; less democratic perhaps, but possibly more efficient as well.

The second possibility would be for BEAMs to be elected for smaller areas - subdivisions of constituencies. This would break the link between the specific patch and its single member, but would ensure that far more members of the electorate had a representative sympathetic to their political views.

Without going through the experience of having been in the Labour Party and then leaving it, nobody can realize how dominated the networks and grapevines of the authority are by the party machine. This is no place for an extended argument in favour of proportional representation, but I think there are specific advantages in relation to this proposal. The tendency of PR to reflect ethnic as well as political diversity is particularly relevant in London, and particularly in connection with education.

Additionally, there may be a place for elected councillors whose brief would cover the whole borough, rather than a patch of it, particularly if one of their main functions would be overseeing the coordination of services.

In my view any one of these variants would be an improvement on the present system.

I realize that this proposal would mean the rewriting of the London borough's constitutions, as well as ILEA's - but what do we have parliamentary draughtsmen for? The change would not be disruptive to the boroughs' functioning, it would give them a few more councillors, and it would significantly strengthen their influence on education policy.

For the ILEA the benefits could be considerable: a body of elected members who have specifically sought out responsibility for education, but whose experience and judgment is rooted in the day-to-day realities of the other front-line services in the boroughs.

Anne Sofer is the SDP member of the ILEA for Camden, St Pancras North. She was chairman of the ILEA schools sub-committee from 1978 to 1981.

Sarah Bayliss reports from the Council of Local Education Authorities' conference in Canterbury

The daunting task of assessing competence

What makes a good teacher? After Sir Keith Joseph's call for a system of teacher assessment geared to identifying and rewarding the good classroom teacher, this question is set to move to the forefront of educational debate.

But Sir Keith will be disappointed if he thinks that lingering on a shelf somewhere is a neatly wrapped package of proposals that can simply be dusted down and put into effect.

Six years after the Inner London Education Authority opened up the issue of school and teacher assessment by publishing its booklet *Keeping the School under Review*, no one has yet defined what makes a good teacher or devised an acceptable method of monitoring the way that teachers do their jobs.

Instead, there have been a host of local initiatives, for the most part aimed at encouraging schools to examine their aims and practices with a view to improving their performance and in the process identifying areas in which their staff could do with extra training.

Only a handful of schools, at the prompting of enthusiastic heads or deputies, notably Birley in Manchester and George Salter in West Bromwich, have stepped into the minefield and set up formal systems of staff appraisal in which senior staff agree areas of responsibility with their juniors and regularly discuss and record how well these are being discharged.

But now, it seems, these ideas are catching on elsewhere. Cambridge, encouraged by the results of *The TES* poll finding - that nearly one teacher in two would welcome pay and promotion being linked to classroom performance - are setting up a pilot scheme of teacher assessment at six local schools.

The authority is being helped by a private firm, Hay Management Consultants, which has extensive experience in devising appraisal systems for government and private scientific establishments.

According to Mr David Patterson, one of its senior consultants, the model the company has devised for research scientists, like teachers a group of people with dauntingly open-ended jobs, represents the best starting point for schools.

The process begins with an interview between the teacher and his immediate superior, usually his head of department, at which the two parties agree the former's "principal accountabilities".

Obviously, these vary from teacher to teacher, but a Scale 1 English teacher could, for instance, be held accountable for "achieving an effective grounding in basic language skills and literary appreciation and fostering enjoyment of English across years one to three".

At a subsequent appraisal meeting, perhaps a year later, the two sides meet, discuss and agree how well these desired outcomes are being achieved.

The National Union of Teachers rejects what amount to merit rises for teachers, saying there are bound to be unacceptable differences among teachers who perform best.

Instead, they would like schools to adopt a system of "self-evaluation", whereby teachers would discuss their progress with their superiors or experienced colleagues with the aim of improving their prospects for career development.

Nick Wood

Performance measures are needed

The need to find methods of assessing the performance of teachers and heads for the purposes of pay and promotion - and in the last resort for demotion and sacking - was emphasized by Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, at the CLEA conference last week.

In a speech which outlined an "agenda for partnership" with the local authorities Sir Keith said the quality of the teaching force was the single most important influence on the standard of education in schools.

He had a sense of some of the difficulties that teachers faced. "I know, at least, that I could not possibly do the job that many of them do."

But he had a duty to raise standards and he believed that a salary system more closely geared to teacher performance would help. "We need a system that will allow the best young teachers to progress more rapidly than the rest. We need a system that will

give extra rewards to the mature classroom teacher of exceptional talent, without requiring promotion to posts carrying managerial responsibilities," he said.

He was convinced of the need for in-service training and believed that some of the most dedicated teachers should be persuaded to leave the "chalk-face" for a period of training. They were misguided in underestimating its worth; performances could improve tenfold as a result.

In-service training for heads was also vital. It should account for one-third of the in-service budget announced by the DES in the spring.

He knew that, collectively, heads gave of their best but when their standards fell short employers should act resolutely. "But I want to say in the same breath that whenever it is necessary for a head to surrender his post, the extraordinarily demanding nature of the job should be taken fully into account; the surrenders should be made

dignified and honourable."

Referring to a DES-commissioned project on the selection of heads, known as the POST project, Sir Keith proposed a national conference in the autumn with I.E.A. and teacher representatives to consider the findings.

Having outlined his commitment to pupil profiles which could throw light on a pupil's character, self-discipline and conduct, Sir Keith said the local potential for good "in schools and in the education partnership."

Later at a press conference Sir Keith said a good team of advisers was essential if sensible appointments were going to be made in schools. Asked how assessment for teachers might develop Sir Keith said he believed some staff knew where their weaknesses lay and they should be encouraged to make self-assessments.

"Some teachers may think they're very good when in fact they're not and for them we may have to bring in peer

reviews," he said. Children, parents, governors and other teachers were all capable of assessing a teacher.

Mr Walter Ulrich, deputy secretary at the DES suggested that, for example, a physics teacher could assess from his pupils' work whether they were being taught mathematics properly.

Sir Keith was not convinced that fixed term contracts would be effective in improving heads' performance. Mr John Swallow, president of the National Association of Headteachers, said this week that the practical implications of Sir Keith's remarks needed explanation and he expected the matter to be raised at a forthcoming meeting at the DES.

Heads were concerned at the way Sir Keith was failing to deal with the practical application of ideas. "This is not the best way to encourage heads who are being increasingly subjected to non-professional advice."

Packed lunch charges urged

Education authorities should be allowed to charge children for eating packed lunches at school, said Mr Geoffrey Wright, a Conservative from Solihull and deputy head of a Warwickshire high school.

Mr Wright, seconding a motion from Coventry which complained about the cost of supervising sandwich lunches, said his authority and others could not afford to provide "free picnic areas" in their schools.

In Solihull 40 per cent of children had sandwiches for lunch; they were provided with cutlery, glasses and plates and they had to be supervised. They created 15,000 hours of washing-up time a year.

If children could be asked to meet the cost they would be charged 12p a week. But if charging remained illegal then I.E.A.s should receive special funds through the rate support grant.

Mr Jeffrey White, deputy chairman of education in Coventry, putting the motion said supervision costs had risen by 20 per cent in the past two years and sandwich eaters were costing his authority about £200,000 a year. He was opposed to charging children and wanted Government recognition of the problem through extra rate support.

Labour and some Conservative delegates reacted against Solihull's idea of charging and the motion was lost.

Parties share resentment of 'centralism'

Resentment over government intervention in the education service was expressed by both Conservative and Labour authority leaders.

Mr Philip Merridale, Conservative chairman of Hampshire's education

committee and the new education chairman of the Association of County Councils called on the Education Secretary to renew a "cooperative and constructive" partnership with I.E.A.s.

Mr John Pearson, Labour chairman of Wakefield education committee

Widen net for YTS agents

The Manpower Services Commission should allow individual colleges of further education to act as managing agents on the Youth Training Scheme, according to a large majority of the conference delegates.

A Conservative delegate from Kent said the rule which obliged colleges to work within consortia on schemes, meant that the education service was failing to get credit for time and effort expended. In Kent most of the consortia schemes were initiated by colleges. He believed more small businesses would be attracted to Mode A schemes if local colleges acted directly as agents.

Mr John Morris, vice-chairman of education in Northumberland, expressed concern for 17 and 18-year-olds who looked likely to lose YTS places to 16-year-olds.

ILEA's huge asbestos bill

The Inner London Education Authority may have to spend £50m in order to ensure that its schools are free from any asbestos hazard.

The huge cost of surveying the potential danger from blue, white and brown asbestos and carrying out remedial work was highlighted by Mrs Margaret Morgan, chairman of the ILEA development sub-committee. And the conference gave unanimous support to her call for Government help for I.E.A.s which had to undertake such work.

Over 300 cases had been reported where parents, staff or governors were demanding action over asbestos in their buildings, she said. So far this year ILEA had spent £3m tackling the hazard and one entire comprehensive had had to be decanted for three weeks.

Mr Geoffrey Flalden, Labour member of Calderdale's education committee, said parents in his area were particularly aware of the potential dangers to health since asbestos had been manufactured in the area. Two schools had had to be decanted at considerable cost to the authority. Special funding was essential, he said.

Schools wait for governors

Hundreds of voluntary schools are still without parent and teacher governors because the Education Secretary has failed to make new instruments and articles of government available to them.

Delegates agreed that CLEA should press the DES to give the issue greater priority and to provide the articles and instruments in accordance with the 1980 Education Act.

Mr Charles Mitchell, chairman of Dorset's schools sub-committee, criticized the DES' over the delay. The current excuse being offered was a shortage of civil servants and resources. Dorset's voluntary schools

had been waiting for more than two years, he said.

Mrs Joan Main, Wiltshire's chairman of education, said about half the county's primary schools were voluntary and were still without the powers to create a governing body as laid down in the Act.

Sir Keith Joseph told the conference he would be putting proposals to the local authority associations for a stipulated date by which all schools would have to comply with the 1980 Act on governors. The DES confirmed later that if such a date was set, the DES itself would have to comply by approving the articles of voluntary schools.



Review of allowances demanded

The Government was urged to review all allowances paid to the post-16s following a debate which highlighted the wide differences in payments.

Mrs Sue Waddington, Labour chairman of Leicestershire's education committee, said too many young people were making an educational choice at 16 on financial grounds. If their parents' income was low they felt obliged to opt for the Youth Training Scheme because the £25-a-week allowance was the highest available.

Mr Fred Riddell, Labour chairman of Nottinghamshire's education committee, said a means-tested educational maintenance allowance of £7.80 was available to sixth formers in his county but they were also being offered £16 a week in supplementary benefit if they studied for less than 21 hours. Parents whose children did not qualify for either of these got around £6 a week in child benefit.

A Labour motion which called for the introduction of educational maintenance allowances, equivalent in value to the YTS allowance, was lost in favour of a Conservative amendment calling for an urgent review by the Government.

Mr William Stubbs, education officer for the Inner London Education Authority, urged that any review should take into account all the policies of the Department of Health and Social Security. There was evidence in London that young people who qualified for an educational maintenance allowance from the authority were being penalized by a reduction in the Family Income Supplement.

Conservative and Liberal Alliance councillors also defeated a Labour motion calling for a change in the law to allow Easter leavers to return for CSE exams while continuing to claim supplementary benefits.

Closure threat

The Centre for Education in World Citizenship could close unless more cash is forthcoming, its director, Ms Margaret Quigg, has warned.

The centre, which promotes studies for international understanding and goodwill, will be 25,000 in the red by the end of this financial year.

Its cash crisis has arisen because of the cost of moving offices and increased office charges coupled with the ending of a five-year grant from the Rowntree Trust and only a small increase in this year's grant from the Department of Education and Science. Almost 2,000 schools and colleges are members of the organization.

Sheffield spells out tertiary options

Sheffield education authority took another important step this week towards implementing a tertiary education plan when it published a series of possible options and established a new tertiary sub-committee.

The city council resolved some months ago that schools and colleges should be reorganized along tertiary lines. Pupils in the city are due to be re-organized by 1990, but rather than split one-third of the schools the city council has chosen a solution which will expand 16-19

NEWS

provision and opportunities for adults.

A consultation document for school governing bodies, trade unions, teachers and parents published this week lists the different ways of going tertiary. Whichever option is chosen all existing sixth-forms and five existing colleges of further education will be replaced by tertiary colleges. The remaining secondary schools will become 11 to 16 schools. The document describes several models which would create between

six and ten tertiary colleges; however the working party which drew it up strongly recommends eight or nine colleges. It says the minimum size should be for 800 full-time equivalent students and the maximum 1,500 students, but initially colleges should be planned for 1,150 students.

Mr Michael Harrison, chief education officer for Sheffield, said that the plan represented "the biggest revolution" in the city's education service since 1968, when secondary schools went comprehensive.

Newham councillors decided last week to stick with an 11-19 comprehensive system for its reorganized secondary schools - rejecting an amendment that the authority should adopt a tertiary system. Now Mr James Pailing, the council's director of education, has been told to produce a report for the council's September meeting on options for the existing schools.

Sarah Bayliss



Change of address -
1st August 1983
The new address of the
Schools Council:
Newcombe House
45 Notting Hill Gate
London W11 3JB
Telephone: 01-229 1234

The Secondary Examinations Council
is also at this address

NEWS

Widespread difficulties found with reading and writing

Official illiteracy figures far too low, says study

Figures showing that two million adults in Britain have a literacy problem are likely to underestimate the true position considerably, according to research published today.

The research, based on the National Child Development Study, shows that one in ten of the 12,500 23-year-olds surveyed had problems with reading, writing or spelling. One in twenty had difficulty with numbers.

The National Child Development Study is a nationally representative and continuing study of all those born in Britain in the week, March 3 to March 9, 1958. They are among those who left school in the first year after the leaving age had been raised to 16.

The research, produced as a pamphlet, *Literacy and Numeracy - Evidence from the National Child Development Study*, by Vanessa Simonite, is published by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit.

It says 4 per cent of the sample reported problems with reading and the majority of these also had problems with spelling or writing. A further 6 per cent had problems only with spelling or writing.

"Men were more likely than women to report literacy problems of some kind since leaving school: 12 per cent of men, compared with 7 per cent of women had had such problems", it adds.

It says that 29 per cent of those with difficulties admitted to problems in everyday life as a result - such as filling in forms or looking and applying for jobs.

Only 8 per cent, the research continues, had attended classes to improve their reading or writing - with women only half as likely as men to have done so.

It adds that 5 per cent of those

interviewed had difficulties with numeracy with - again - a striking difference between the sexes recorded among those who had attended classes to improve their skills. "One in ten men and one in forty women who had had problems with number work since leaving school had been to classes for help."

The report says the figure of two million "functionally illiterate" adults - 6 per cent of the adult population - is widely quoted but adds: "The evidence from the National Child Development Study suggests there may be considerably more than two million adults in Great Britain whose literacy skills are not sufficient to meet the demands placed on them."

It recommends there should be further study to "explain the exceptionally low rate of class attendance among women who are lacking in basic skills".

Bert Lodge reports the decisions on the future shape of training courses and the body empowered to oversee them

ACSET sets out standards for teacher training

The criteria on which Sir Keith Joseph, Education Secretary, will from this autumn judge whether a teacher training course merits his approval were agreed on Wednesday by the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers.

They will involve experienced teachers being trained in interviewing techniques to help sift through applicants for the profession and a lengthening of the Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course for intending teachers to at least 36 weeks from autumn next year.

Though the committee feels the course should be much longer to accommodate all the standards proposed, an extension of the current average of about 30 weeks is at least a start.

Sir Keith announced in March that he intended to exercise his powers to approve or reject courses and ACSET was asked to draw up criteria.

Implicit in the move is the need for a national accreditation body to oversee the professional content of courses in both university and public sector (TES, June 24). Its structure by the committee this week.

The criteria for judging teacher training courses are grouped under the headings of education of students, quality of academic content of the course, professional aspects of training and final assessment. They will be published as a circular.

Experienced practising teachers should be involved and should receive training to make their contribution effective. They should sit in at the personal interview of each candidate.

Previous work with children or adolescents should count in the candidate's favour. A blend of "awareness, sensitivity, enthusiasm and ease of communication" should be looked for.

In addition at least grade C in O level maths and English required for all entrants, students going in for secondary teaching should hold an A level appropriate to their intended main teaching subject. Intending primary teachers should have a broad

base of studies at O and A level and particularly an A level in an area where they aim to concentrate.

Entrants to postgraduate courses must have in their degree a level of knowledge equivalent to at least two years of study of subjects "related to the developing curriculum of schools". If they intend to teach secondary pupils they should have attained this standard in one or two subjects relevant to their teaching specialism.

In BEd courses two years should be allocated to subject studies at a higher education level. At postgraduate level intending primary teachers will need curriculum studies in addition to their degree in order to prepare them for teaching across the curriculum.

For intending secondary teachers a substantial part of the course must be spent on the methodology of teaching their specialism to a specific age range. Intending primary teachers should spend substantial time on the teaching of language and mathematics.

Teaching practice in schools should amount to at least 12 weeks for PGCE students and at least 15 for those doing a BEd. These periods should also include observation, involvement with out of school activities and with parents and the community. The current average length of a PGCE course of about 30 weeks should be extended to at least 36.

Experienced practising teachers should be involved in the planning and assessment of students' school experience. In the colleges a high proportion of the staff should have continuing regular contact with classroom teaching. Each college should set up a teacher training committee on which local schools are represented.

Nobody should be awarded a BEd degree unless they have shown themselves to be a competent teacher. Undergraduate courses should be planned so that unsuitability for the job can be identified early and those students excluded from the profession. But their course should still lead to a degree provided their academic work is satisfactory.

Central control preferred to regional committees

A single national advisory council should be responsible for accrediting all teacher training courses on behalf of the Secretary of State, ACSET recommends. It should be made up of 15 to 20 independent people appointed by the Education Secretary.

Although a local committee based on each institution is also recommended, the decision to go for a national trans-binary council renders obsolete proposals made last year by an ACSET sub-committee for reviving the regional professional committees. These were acknowledged to have been supervising professional content of courses with only varying degrees of commitment.

Validation of the academic content of courses would remain the responsibility of the universities and the Council for National Academic Awards, ACSET emphasizes. But their work and that of the new body would overlap. "In particular we emphasize the importance of the involvement of HMI as the main source of professional advice to the Secretary of State."

This recommendation, which amounts to handing the Inspectorate a pass-key to university departments of education, has caused considerable controversy. Inspectors have traditionally kept away from universities, but it is known that Sir Keith is anxious to see the tradition ended.

Besides the national body, each institution involved in teacher training should establish a local teacher training committee of representatives of the institution, employers and practising teachers. No course should be examined by the national council which has not first been the subject of detailed discussion by the local teacher training committee. In-service training should continue to have an essentially local basis.

The volume of work involved in a competent accreditation system will be substantial, ACSET believes. The council would require its own budget and a competent and properly staffed secretariat. It would probably have a sub-structure of committees, each chaired by a member of the advisory council.

Black pupils' expulsions were unfair, say parents

by Nick Wood

A group of black councillors and co-opted members is to quiz children who have been barred from school - and their parents - about the fairness of disciplinary procedures.

The move, by the Labour-controlled Brent Council, follows protests by blacks that their children are unfairly singled out for expulsions, suspensions and withdrawal to special units.

Teachers in the authority, who claim it will undermine school discipline, have boycotted the investigation.

The authority will write to the families of suspended children inviting them to meet the councillors next term at the town hall.

The investigation is being led by Mrs Ambrozio Neil, the black vice chairman of the education committee, whose son, Ambroz, was suspended from Willesden High School in 1976 when Mr Max Morris, former president of the National Union of Teachers, was the headmaster.

The NUT later brought a successful libel action on Mr Morris's behalf.



Ambrozio Neil... leading the investigation.

against the newspaper, *West Indian World*, over its report of the incident.

Mr Bryan Stark, education chairman, said that the long-term aim of the inquiry was to get schools to reduce the number of children who were barred from the premises. The

working party, which is chaired by Mrs Neil and includes two co-opted representatives of the black community, which makes up one in three of Brent's population, will make recommendations to the education committee after conducting the interviews.

PRIMARY

Early encouragement sought for girls

by Hilary Wilce

Girls should become familiar with science, maths and craft, design and technology in primary school in order to help them overcome difficulties with maths and science.

They should also receive good career advice, and a thorough understanding of the implications of subject option choices before the age of 14, a Government advisory committee has said.

The Women's National Commission has written to Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, urging him to encourage work in schools which will help prevent girls becoming second-class citizens.

It emphasizes that research into sex differentiation carried out under the former Schools Council should continue under the new school curriculum development body, and that intervention projects in areas like science and technology should also be followed through.

Government funds should be made available to specific projects which encourage non-traditional activities like home economics for boys and workshop training for girls.

Both the Department of Education and Science and the local authorities should develop programmes which encourage women to move into senior teaching jobs, Sir Keith is told, and the DES should prompt local education authorities to implement policies designed to prevent girls from slipping behind in schools.

The letter is the outcome of an inquiry into secondary education by the Women's National Commission. This came after a previous WNC study of youth unemployment which indicated that schools were doing an inadequate job in equipping girls for the changing demands of the job market.

The inquiry was chaired by Mrs Nancy Catchpole, president of the

British Federation of University Women and co-chairman of the WNC, and incorporated evidence from the DES and responses from 86 of the 103 local education authorities in England and Wales.

Helping young children to develop an interest in physical science and technology is the single most important thing that women primary teachers can do to combat sex role stereotyping.

If primary children see women teaching aspects of physics and chemistry it will help to modify the entrenched masculine images of these subjects, Mr Barry Everley, a lecturer in education studies at Sheffield City Polytechnic, writes in the summer edition of *Primary Education Review*.

Primary Education Review, Summer 1983, No 17, 75p from the NUT, Hamilton House, Mableton Place, London WC1H 9BD.

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Nick Wood reports on the annual HMI survey of the effects of l.e.a. spending on the education service

Cuts: holding the line—just

Needs to do better—that is Her Majesty's Inspectorate's verdict on the education service in its latest report on the effects of local education authority spending policies.

After the swinging cuts of 1981, which so alarmed the inspectors, l.e.a.s largely hold the line in 1982. The pace of deterioration in provision has at least been slowed, HMI says.

Twenty-two authorities improved their overall levels of provision, while nine reduced them. Under the impact of falling rolls, pupil: teacher ratios improved in over two thirds of authorities.

In contrast to 1981, the gaps between the best and the worst authorities are no longer widening.

Most have "broadly satisfactory levels of provision across most of the aspects assessed"—teaching staff, non-teaching staff, in-service training, induction, advisory services, premises and books, materials and equipment.

The fringe groups—the l.e.a.s with exceptionally good or bad levels of provision—remained largely unchanged. The number of authorities with satisfactory or better provision across all seven headings went up from five to six. There are still four authorities with low levels of spending giving HMI cause for concern.

But the composition of the bottom four—not named by HMI last year but later identified as Wiltshire, Norfolk, Somerset and Gateshead—has changed. One authority increased its spending sufficiently to escape the inspectors' censure, only to be replaced by a county authority that cut its provision from a previously low level.

HMI warns that although the crude measures



Pressures of change: Schools face demands for more 'vocational' timetables.

of provision, notably pupil: teacher ratios, give some grounds for satisfaction, they tend to mask deficiencies which have been extant for some years.

"Provision and falling rolls may, however, interact in such a way that the same level of provision provides a less broad curriculum, less

differentiation by ability or less good match of teachers' skills to their teaching programmes." The position is exacerbated by the growing pressure on schools to reshape their timetable along more vocational lines.

"The great majority of education in schools and colleges is adequately provided for, but the

nature of the inadequacies observed in individual institutions is such that they cannot be shrugged off in any general satisfaction.

"When standards in the basic curriculum and the applicability of education to earning and work are, as now, at a premium for pupils and students of all abilities, access to them has to be assured.

"Yet the observations show that some pupils in some institutions from primary schools to further education, in some parts of the country do not have that access."

The report is based on returns from district inspectors in all 96 English l.e.a.s and reports by HMIs on visits to schools and colleges in the autumn of 1982.

The report brought an angry comment from Mr Fred Jarvis, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers. He said: "The HMI report should shatter the complacency of the Secretary of State, for it confirms all that the NUT has been saying about the effect of cuts on the needs of our children."

"Since Sir Keith Joseph tells us that he attaches much importance to what the HMI tell him, we hope he will now recognise that our schools have inadequate resources and that any further cuts could only damage even more our educational standards and opportunities."

Report by Her Majesty's Inspectors on the effects of local authority expenditure policies on the education service in England—1982. Copies available from: DES, Publications Despatch Centre, Honeywell Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ.

See-saw effect in schools: some better, some worse

The evidence is that in most authorities there was a mix of slight improvements in some aspects of provision, slight worsening in others, and a standstill in the remainder."

In 1981, 71 l.e.a.s. reduced provision, 16 making moderate to considerable cuts. In 1982, only nine reduced provision, while 22 increased it.

Primary pupil: teacher ratios went up in 68 authorities, three more than secondary. Across the country, secondary pupil: teacher ratios were unchanged at 16.6:1, while primary PTRs improved from 22.7 to 22.5.

But, as the report makes clear, these moves were not sufficient to prevent reductions in the range of subjects offered by schools, cuts in supply cover and provision for the induction of new teachers. The fall in

standards of provision, the report says.

"Overall pupil: teacher ratios may improve but the nature of the numerical improvement achieved in this way may be random and cannot guarantee that all schools have adequate supplies of the teachers they need or that every school in an authority is better placed than in 1981", HMI says.

In general, authorities and schools are holding the ground, the report says.

"Last year's report pointed out that in l.e.a.s. and schools were surviving financially by doing less and that they were obliged to take the less in the form it came to hand rather than by stippling it to meet educational priorities."

"Even with the evidence of much sharper management, that is the ground that is being held."

"It is characterized by levels and standards of resources which are sometimes inadequate to maintain the

status quo, (already limited in many cases), by significant disparities between and within schools; and by schools in general being less well placed to respond constructively and enthusiastically to the many calls for educational improvements and change that come from the education service itself and from parents and society, and which often require either extra educational range or diversification or both."

Mathematics, science and remedial teaching are threatened both in primary and secondary schools, the inspectors say.

"Many primary and secondary schools have found themselves obliged... to concentrate on the middle range of pupils with a consequence that the educational needs of the most and least able are not adequately reflected in either curriculum or organization."

Secondary standards still under threat

The cumulative effects of financial constraint noted in previous years is undermining attempts to maintain standards at secondary level, even though there was "no further serious erosion of the levels of resources made available to schools" in 1982, the report says.

HMI identifies staffing as the main constraint on schools. One authority in four is attempting to cope with falling rolls by introducing curriculum-led staffing. In 53 l.e.a.s., staffing was found to be "generally satisfactory", but HMIs discovered 12 authorities with below average PTRs who had further reduced staffing levels.

One bright spot was that more teachers were qualified to teach the subjects they were covering. But this did not apply to small secondary schools. They have noticeably more non-specialist staff teaching subjects for which they were not qualified than larger schools.

As noted in last year's report, option choices for pupils in years four

and six were restricted. In some schools, the inspectors found more classes in which pupils taking a variety of examinations were taught side by side.

Some minority languages and music were either dropped or taught outside the normal timetable.

One third of authorities offered a better range of courses for sixth formers not taking A levels, "but the extra provision was not always well planned and there was still much use of examination courses inappropriate to the needs and aptitude of the pupils."

Provision for A-level pupils worsened in some parts of the country.

"Secondary schools were in general well placed to meet the demands currently made on them in respect of their general curriculum, (although the lines of Circular 68/82 and subsequent associated consultation documents on science and modern languages, and of the Cockcroft report),

and six were restricted. In some schools, the inspectors found more classes in which pupils taking a variety of examinations were taught side by side."

THE TIMES SUPPLEMENTS' REPRINT SERVICE SCHOOL VISITS

In February this year The Times Educational Supplement published a special 16-page feature on School Visits. It gives details on day trips to various museums, the Stock Exchange and historical buildings all round the UK as well as covering Venture Weeks, a 'Do-it-yourself' Europe survival course together with tips on how to make your school visits enjoyable occasions for both pupils and teachers.

This is now available in reprint form, price £1.00 and can be obtained by sending a cheque/postal order made payable to Times Newspapers Limited (no cash please) to: Frances Goddard, The Times Supplements, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX.

Provision level stays the same

There has been no significant change in the level of provision for books, materials and equipment and for the repair and maintenance of school buildings, the report says.

Standards were found to be "satisfactory" in between three quarters and four fifths of the schools visited, which suggests a "substantial proportion of schools with one deficiency or another."

The situation was worst in secondary schools where the inspectors found serious shortages of materials for art, CDT, science and practical subjects in one fifth of the institutions visited. Nearly 60 l.e.a.s. failed to provide sufficient books for their secondary schools.

No progress has been made on clearing the backlog of repair and maintenance work needed to return school buildings to good order.

Tight staffing widespread

In primary school shortages and disparities in staffing were the "key feature" of the inspectors' findings. In the schools visited by inspectors, PTRs ranged from 8.5:1 to 31.0:1.

The report says: "Small rural schools and urban schools in l.e.a.s. which also have a large number of small rural schools, were facing particular difficulties of tight staffing."

Opportunities for teachers to undergo in-service training "improved marginally" but the familiar barriers—lack of supply cover and money for travel or attendance—were still at work.

HMI expresses "particular concern" about the continuing deterioration in induction programmes for probationary teachers.

Despite the attempts l.e.a.s. are making to run services more efficiently, years of cutbacks have left their mark, the inspectors say.

Parents chip in

Parental contributions to the costs of education were widespread, the report says.

Judging by its visits, HMI says that in two schools in three parents are making "moderate to considerable" contributions to the provision of books and materials.

Commenting on primary schools, it says: "There was clear evidence that (except, perhaps, in London) primary schools were frequently dependent on parental contributions, not only for extras but to buy books and basic materials."

Although redistribution of resources could help some institutions, in others there were "simply not enough resources."

It suggests that the "continuing stream of parental contributions" is unlikely to remedy such disadvantages. In the run-down schools that need extra money most, parents are often unable to help.

Straining training with demand

WEST GERMANY

Caroline Cuss reports unexpected pressure on vocational schemes.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's rash pre-election pledge of a training place this year for every "capable and willing" youngster looks unlikely to be fulfilled. From now until September, the start of the training year, youngsters will be frantically searching for places.

In the last two years, the West German dual system of theoretical instruction in vocational training schools and practical training in firms, has proved less recession-proof than many had hoped.

The Government stated last week that it believed firms would fulfil their promise to provide 655,000 places by September and a further 30,000 places if needed.

But recently released figures paint a less optimistic picture. Between October 1982 and May this year 18.5 per cent more applicants sought places through labour exchanges than during the same period in 1981, while the number of places on offer dropped by 7 per cent. This left 43 per cent more youngsters without places than in May 1982.

The Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the unions estimate that 655,000 places will not meet the demand this year—it is possible, they say, that applicants may exceed the 1982 figure of 667,000. They also maintain that as many as 263,000 youngsters did not get a place last year (official figure: 26,000) and their forecast for this year is 270,000 if urgent measures are not taken.

Increasingly, even the more able pupils, disillusioned with post-university career opportunities, are seeking training places—a trend which is further straining the system and worsening chances for the disadvantaged. This year such youngsters could make up 13 per cent of the applicants.

This year's estimate of the likely number of places required also does not take account of the Government's considerable cut in financial assistance for those continuing in full-time schooling beyond the school-leaving age. This could produce many more would-be trainees.

An official at the Education Ministry described the situation as "80 per cent a girl problem". The traditional prejudices of industry towards girls die hard: 50 per cent of training places are reserved for boys, but only 25 per cent for girls. The Government is, however, running a scheme to train girls in technical and commercial fields.

There are numerous schemes to relieve the pressure on the dual system: a full-time vocational preparation year; the option of repeating the last year at the secondary modern (Hauptschule) to get better results; courses run by the labour exchange; and an extra year of compulsory schooling. These, of course, merely delay entry into the training system.

The Government's programme for the disadvantaged catered for in 1982 for 6,000 remedial pupils, foreigners, and those without the Hauptschule final exam, who had not found a training place, and it is to be extended in 1983/84.

To encourage employers to train more youngsters, the youth employment protection law has been relaxed to allow longer hours in hospitals, paper and textile industries, building, animal care and bakeries. The unions, however, fear that this will lead to the exploitation of youngsters as cheap labour and a lowering of training standards.

UNITED STATES

Peter David on Federal action to enforce desegregation.

The Reagan Administration is to take the state of Alabama to court to force it to complete the desegregation of its colleges and universities. In a suit filed last week, the Department of Justice accused Alabama of retaining vestiges of the separate education systems for blacks and whites it maintained before the Supreme Court outlawed segregated education in 1954.

According to the Justice Department, black students and staff trying to gain access to the traditionally white colleges in Alabama have been consistently discriminated against, while the state's traditionally black colleges have been unable to attract a reasonable proportion of whites.

In 1980, the department alleges, some predominantly white colleges in Alabama had fewer than 2.1 per cent of black undergraduates. At the Alabama State University, a traditionally black university, blacks accounted for more than 99 per cent of undergraduate enrolments.

The Administration's decision to take Alabama to court was unexpected, and has surprised its friends and foes alike. Since its election in 1980, the administration has adopted a policy of persuasion rather than litigation in efforts to encourage racial desegregation. It opposes the mandatory busing of school children and has been trying to persuade southern states with "vestiges" of dual education systems to eliminate them voluntarily.

Critics of the Administration's softer approach to civil rights enforcement have been quick to dismiss the suit against Alabama as a cosmetic measure designed to improve President Reagan's image in the eyes of blacks and other minorities.

The move will certainly have more than a simply cosmetic impact on Alabama, however. With the ultimate sanction of being able to cut off Federal funds for Alabama's colleges, the Justice Department suit is likely to herald far-reaching changes in the state's further and higher education system.

At the most extreme, a reform plan acceptable to the Federal Govern-

OVERSEAS

Vestigial racism lands Alabama in the dock



Change under duress: Alabama University admits its first black students in 1963 after President Kennedy ordered National Guardsmen to take control of the campus from segregationist Governor Wallace.

ment might require Alabama to close or merge several racially-identified institutions and impose strict quotas on the proportion of black and white staff and students at particular colleges. Where black and white colleges offer similar courses, one might be ordered to close to force students in particular fields to enter a desegregated institution.

It is doubtful whether the Administration's decision to prosecute Alabama signals a major change in President Reagan's overall policy towards educational desegregation. The Department of Justice appears to have been

forced into tough action by the state's obdurate refusal to negotiate a voluntary desegregation plan with the Department of Education.

Several southern states which are deemed to retain vestiges of their formerly segregated higher education systems have put forward cogent arguments for slow integration. Most have historically black colleges whose presidents argue that black students have much to gain in an educational environment that is predominantly black and therefore comfortable and unthreatening.

For this reason, the Federal Gov-

ernment has generally been content to give state education systems ample time to achieve more integration of their colleges and universities.

A total of 19 southern states operated separate black and white universities until the Supreme Court's 1954 ruling. For more than a decade, civil rights leaders have resorted to the courts, citing the "equal protection" Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution to prod the Federal Government into faster action to eliminate traces of the dual systems.

Since 1980, the Reagan Administration has held more or less productive negotiations with five such states and extracted acceptable promises that they would make rapid progress to desegregation. Alabama, however, has been dragging its feet.

In January 1982 the Department of Education fired a warning shot over the state's bows by referring the issue to the Department of Justice. It emphasized, however, that it regarded legal action as a last resort.

The fact that the Department of Justice has waited 18 months before filing a suit suggests that the Administration has despaired of reaching a voluntary agreement. The allegations contained in the Government's suit are also unexpectedly harsh. Alabama is accused not only of failing to desegregate its colleges, but of deliberately reinforcing inequalities between blacks and whites.

In apportioning funds for agricultural education and research, for example, the state has devoted far greater resources to Auburn College (white) than to its black counterpart, the Alabama A and M.

Even so, the Administration has made it clear that it still hopes to avoid "full blown litigation". Mr Bradford Reynolds, the assistant attorney general, said last week that filing the suit did not preclude further negotiations for a voluntary settlement.

Paper remedies for violent abuse

CHINA

Jane Marshall on popular and official contempt for education.

A brutal assault on a primary school teacher in China's Sichuan province has prompted intervention by the top leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, while circulars at national and local level have condemned continuing violence against teachers and vandalism of schools.

The Sichuan teacher, Liu Zhongyue, was beaten unconscious by five men, who assaulted her with knives, sticks and whips. Although the case was reported at once, the local Changshou authorities took no action for a month, and even then let four of the attackers go free.

They acted only when the case was publicized in the press and brought to the attention of the national lead-

ership of the Communist Party, which ordered the local party committee to investigate.

According to the local party secretary, this was only one of 50 cases which had occurred in Changshou in recent years. He said the local officials in charge were "vague and sometimes erroneous" and sometimes openly sided with the criminals.

The Sichuan education bureau has subsequently issued a circular urging a concerted propaganda campaign to "educate cadres and people, so that they can develop a new trend of loving and respecting teachers".

It indicates the scale of offences against school property in specifying unauthorized entry into school, "kicking up a row and outrageously beating up teachers, students and workers". It lists, among other crimes, encroachment upon or destruction of land, equipment, playgrounds, sites, enclosures, trees and crops; tampering with

electrical wiring and pollution of water supplies.

Reports show that abuses of school premises also include theft and looting of furniture, books and building materials; illegal grazing of cattle, growing crops and erecting houses on playing fields, and disruption of classes. In a recent case, a local party secretary from Hubei province, who was director of a clinic, led about 50 men to assault the staff of a middle school because the headmaster would not allow his factory to dig and take earth away from the school grounds.

In Fujian province the authorities are investigating reports that more than 1,000 teachers were beaten up in one year.

A joint circular just issued by the ministries of education and public security on maintaining discipline in schools points out that "idle young people, especially hoodlums and criminals, often force their way into

schools, destroy property and disturb normal discipline". It calls on local authorities and police forces to "take effective measures" to ensure security.

But issuing circulars alone is unlikely to solve the problem of violence against teachers and schools while contempt for education and the teaching profession remains widespread, especially in the countryside where independently-minded peasants often send their children to earn workpots in the fields rather than to school.

The attitude, now condemned by China's leadership, which prevailed during the cultural revolution, when intellectuals, including teachers, were branded as "evil-smelling people", persists also in the multiple tiers of local officialdom, where education funds are misappropriated and complaints against vandals remain uninvestigated.

Minister provokes a cultural storm

Alarm bells were sounded at the recent Eleventh Conference of the European Comparative Education Society, which discussed multicultural education.

The meeting took place in Würzburg and was sponsored by the German Federal Education Ministry. Unfortunately the Education Minister, Dr Dorothee Wilts, was unable to give the opening address, but her speech, read by a senior civil servant, still caused a furor.

The local press was in no doubt about its central message. "Total integration or cultural separation" ran the banner headlines the next day. "There is only the choice between

social integration and return to the country of origin with financial help from the host country," the speech declared.

It emphasized the need both to enrich German pupils' educational experiences through cultural diversity and to maintain the cultural identity of the countries of origin of "inigrant workers' children, but painted a picture of a stark final choice.

A round robin was quickly signed by more than 60 delegates from all countries. It took exception to the "view expressed by the representative of the Federal Ministry of Education that 'foreigners' should integrate or get out".

It went on to emphasize: "The issue of the oppression of cultural groups—whether political, economic, racial, linguistic, religious or sexual—needs to be a central focus of the conference."

It also sought to "draw attention to the composition of the conference and the background of the speakers and the presenters of papers, which does not adequately represent oppressed cultural groups in Europe..."

In voicing their feelings about the Federal Ministry's policy pronouncements, delegates were much concerned by the anticipated response the ideas might have in their own countries.

Alan Little

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LETTERS

Alarmed by TVEI

Sir - The report (TES, July 8) that the Manpower Services Commission is to extend the New Technical and Vocational Education Initiative to another 40 local education authorities from September 1984 must be greeted with alarm by all concerned about the quality of educational provision.

Again, there has been no consultation with teachers' unions, i.e. a.s. or even the NUTVEI steering group. Again, an unaccountable body - the MSC - is changing the curriculum from the centre. Its technique is simple and insidious. Only those i.e.s who accept a particular view of education (or are prepared to accept that view for financial reasons) will get money. The fact that this decision is announced at the same time as the Chancellor imposes further drastic cuts in public spending can only reinforce the view that the Government's intention is anything but the overall improvement of education. This extension has been announced before the initial - supposedly pilot - schemes have even started. The only interpretation of this is that the Government is unprepared to allow its education policy to be subjected to any meaningful scrutiny and discussion.

If there is a case for a fundamental alteration of the relationship between school and work and unemployment (as I believe there is), then surely those arguments hold for all students. The majority of the NUTVEI pilot schemes are at the outset designed for a particular section of the ability range. As many of us warned, the NUTVEI will be divisive and selective in its operation. The blunderbuss tactics of the MSC are, in practice, preventing the wide-ranging discussion which is necessary.

WILL REESE
163 Duggins Lane
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Racist advert

At the time of advertisement in the TES (July 8) is racist. It does nothing to help many people who are working towards a just society with racial equality.

I find it quite incomprehensible that you can, on one page, show this racist material alongside an article on the formation of an anti-racist policy by the Inner London Education Authority and another on the Schools Council's multicultural education project, led by David Houlton.

I feel that you should ensure that the TES does nothing further to perpetuate racism in any form.

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No panacea for geography's ills

Sir - The syllabus developed by the Schools Council Geography (16-19) Project, and the accompanying examination, has clearly captured the liking of Hugh Prudden (TES letters, July 1). However, it is important to view these developments in the context of all available syllabuses and examinations in this subject at this level. In addition, it may be noted that this syllabus has some similarities with that for A level environmental studies which has been offered by the University of London GCE Board since 1977.

Currently, the University of London GCE Board administers the geography (16-19) pilot A level examination. This development is a reflection of the board's belief that there is a place for such a syllabus within the totality of A level geography syllabuses available. There have been two operational examinations in the light of which amendments may be made to both the syllabus and the scheme of assessment. It is possible that the A level examination will be made freely available, on an inter-board basis, to all schools and colleges in the near future, and that it will be

administered by the London University GCE Board.

At the same time, the University of London GCE Board, like other GCE examination boards, has its own longer-standing A level syllabus in geography, which was developed in the mid 1970s, is currently undergoing review and possible adjustment, and is now a highly regarded syllabus by schools and colleges that it attracts larger entries each year than any of its predecessors.

What is more to the point, it

incorporates a number of the characteristics which Mr Prudden implies are unique to the 16-19 project and its examination; it provides challenging examination questions, the list of topics for study includes both the traditional and the more progressive (with provision for teacher and pupil selection which is so often sought and, even when available, is not used), and there is a wealth of material available from a variety of sources. Further, those responsible for the development

Questions that should be answered

Sir - Further to my letter in your July 1 issue welcoming the new "Geography 16-19" curriculum development project, there are some questions (cut from the letter as published) which should be given further thought before opting for the new course:

1 Which well-loved topics will disappear, especially in physical geography, for example, the daily weather?
2 Man-environment themes are all pervasive: will the student tire of this reiteration?
3 Will the understanding and interpretation of landscape get enough

emphasis?
4 Will the work-sheet dominate the study routine or will there be room for chalk and talk?
5 Should there not be "Intellectual" as opposed to "Applied" modules, for example, the influence of rock type and structure, past climates and sea/land level changes upon landforms.

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Training heads

Sir - As an essential purpose of Lyn Gray's and my article, "If you want to get a head" (TES, June 24) was to stimulate discussion of what had been a rather neglected area of debate, the responses printed in your letters columns of July 8 are extremely gratifying. While we cannot claim to have polarized our audience, it is instructive to observe how your respondents of July 8 each illustrate key issues in the training of headteachers.

While Julia Reay criticized us for being "depressing" and "theoretical" - a strange conclusion to reach when we were arguing that there was no current body of validated theory which could direct the development of training initiatives, and that the generation through

of the type of project which she advocates is an example of the sort of exercise for which we were calling. While there are doubts to be investigated in her approach (job exchange and rotation) and potential i.e.s. and union difficulties, this would appear to be a project worth encouraging, especially where school senior management teams are involved.

It is less easy to discern positive benefit in T.E.A. Ashton's self-confessed condescending agglomeration of unsolicited statements: this really is an attempt to categorize education as if it were a mechanistic process devoid of values and ethics, with the outrageous assumption that inputs and outputs of education are quantifiable and measurable. "Management" is about the mobilization of resources to achieve a specific aim. The principles involved are the same whether the aim is the manufacture of screws or the development of talents.

It is precisely this sort of blinkered approach to the management of education which encourages headteachers and other practitioners to develop a justified scepticism, or even understandable derision.

Graham B Smith has certainly risen to the bait where he seeks to defend what Lyn and I termed the educational equivalent of weight-watchers clubs where heads attend discussion courses and share their fears, hopes, problems and aspirations with their peers.

Signal failure

Sir - Dr Joyce Morris is reported (TES, July 8) as saying that "a revolution was needed in the provision of linguistic knowledge as a foundation in teacher training". Surely anyone concerned about the quality of teaching in reading and language throughout the curriculum must support her call for a proper knowledge base for these essential tasks. But when we survey our educational system, can we find any teachers who are more deprived of the basic essentials of their subject?

We do not doubt that some benefit derives from these support groups - even if it is only comfort. But, from our own experience of having been involved with many such groups, we are convinced that the benefit is small.

In our article we were calling for training expressed by learning through doing - experiential learning and action research. If one believes that change, and especially attitudinal change, can be achieved by restricted discussion in the comfort of a peer group, and that the change so effected will be sufficient to encourage the types of change for which the training initiative was presumably intended and those which the demands of our changing society require, then one need look no further than Mr Smith's

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Impact on schools

Sir - Lynion Gray and Ian Waitt mention in their article, "If you want to get a head", that the evaluation of the Northern Ireland Department of Education's management training programme has shown that "there has been disappointingly little impact on the participants' schools". I suspect that this comment derives from a

review of the evaluation report "Management in Secondary Education" (NICER, 1983) carried by Education of April 15 and not from the report itself.

Do in-service discussion courses actually increase a headteacher's effectiveness?

The teacher education system has signally failed to provide its students with adequate knowledge of the linguistic systems (phonetic, syntactic, pragmatic, etc.). The school curriculum, by pretending that there has been no revolution in linguistic knowledge, has conspired to deprive prospective students of any insight into the range of study available to them.

Teachers of reading and language have endured a double deficit: their training has given them no precise and consistent knowledge about language, and their education has conditioned them not to know that such knowledge exists.

of the syllabus and the setting of the examination papers have always been alive to modern developments within the subject.

There are those who see the dominance of the man-environment philosophy in the geography (16-19) syllabus and examination as narrow, dangerous and misguided, in part because it precludes overt study of man's physical environment per se, and because it tends to preclude large-scale study of areas. In contrast, longer-established geography syllabuses and examinations at this level have tended to take a broader view of the subject, and to have relied on a wider range of end-of-course examination question types, with or without coursework elements.

Developments such as the Schools Council Geography (16-19) Project are, of course, both stimulating and refreshing. Yet they are not to be seen, as has been suggested in some quarters, as the panacea for ills which may be, at least in part, imaginary. BRIAN P PRICE
Geography subject officer
School Examinations Department
University of London

review of the evaluation report "Management in Secondary Education" (NICER, 1983) carried by Education of April 15 and not from the report itself.

As author of that report I wish to point out that the evaluation did not seek in any way to assess the programme's impact on schools nor did it report any conclusions on this subject. The evaluation was a formative one designed to provide course organizers with a continual review of the training programme as well as a longer term perspective on same, after heads had returned to school (page 13).

The time scale of the evaluation which ran concurrently with the first two years of the programme was too short to allow for any "product" evaluation. However, in post-conference interviews, heads sometimes let it be known voluntarily that they had undertaken certain activities with a view to the implementation of change or had adopted new approaches to handling certain situations (page 78). The evaluator did not regard this information as evidence for the success or failure of the enterprise nor was she primarily concerned to report such effects. I should like to refer readers to the report itself for corroboration of these statements.

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Weak evidence

Sir - You quote results from the DES survey of primary schools (TES, July 8) which purport to show that mixed-age classes are a bad idea. In fact, this evidence is very weak.

The DES report does not present a clear definition of mixed-age classes and presents no data for children under nine. Most seriously, no attempt is made in the fact that mixed-age and single-age classes could have differed in other respects.

Hence, the fact that attainment is observed to be lower in mixed-age classes does not mean that the age composition of a class affects attainment.

Whenever policy implications are involved in the comparison of groups in education, for example, large and small classes, selective and non-selective schools, it is essential that these groups should be as similar as possible on other variables. Unfortunately, this is often not the case.

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Unseen handicap

Sir - Congratulations on giving front page coverage to "the unseen handicap" - deafness (TES, July 8). However, I should like to sound a note of warning. Parents of deaf children should beware of assuming that hearing aids of the type used in your photograph can allow the deaf child aural experiences comparable with normal hearing.

All deaf children require the best possible hearing aid for their individual needs. Then, depending on the type of hearing loss and many other factors, further measures will be necessary.

For example: a child whose hearing loss is moderate enough to allow him/her to cope in an ordinary classroom has entirely different needs from the pre-lingually, profoundly deaf child whose education is best provided in a school for the deaf which pursues a policy of total communication (the use of sign language and fingerspelling in conjunction with aural/oral methods).

SUSANNE F. TURFUS
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Scientific argument

Sir - In the days when the Schools Council was rather more political, I offered them a small cheap project on "teaching science via purposes that are real to children".

The science panel asked detailed questions and approved. "The committee, however, gave me an interview of approximately one minute. Someone asked me what I meant by real and I explained that if a child wanted to build a wigwam, that, in my sense, was a real purpose.

The huge committee seemed to respond with hoots of laughter. Someone muttered about "playing", no one supported me or questioned me further and I was not allowed to explain further.

A silence fell and I realized that I was expected to retire from what to me was an unenvying experience. Indeed, two people, not members of the committee, followed me out and expressed dismay at the treatment I had received.

However, when I recovered I realized that a much more important educational idea had been lost at that council. This same idea comes up again in your front page article of July 8 which highlights a new technological approach to science teaching. I therefore feel it is important to point out that there are two meanings to the term technology in this context.

One is large scale industry; important to know about but not actually "done" by young pupils. The other is the old meaning of technology: any craft or other purpose carried out by using, among other ideas, ideas from science.

I am very glad to see that technology is regarded as one of the possible "ways in" to science by the Secondary Science Curriculum Review (among

Checking output on a shoestring

Sir - Your reviewer of *Standards in English Schools* (TES, July 8) was so eager to address the task of discrediting the findings of this latest report from the National Council for Educational Standards that he omitted to tell your readers of what the study reported was a study. It was, in fact, a first study of all the public examination results of maintained schools in England. These full results became available for the first time only last year as a result of a clause in the 1980 Education Act, a clause which was passed against the total opposition of the NUT and other educational supply-side interest groups.

This once said, the first major question of public interest to arise is why it has been left to the National Council for Educational Standards, a private body operating on a shoestring of private money, to monitor these measures of educational output. Why is this monitoring not being done either within or around the various educational bureaucracies or in one of

Simple technical differences

Sir - As you say ("Comment" July 8), it is important to air technical differences between the recent National Council for Educational Standards (NCES) study and research findings from other studies which do not show comprehensives as "worse". Though technical, some differences are not hard to understand.

Your readers may not be aware of a major difference between the NCES work and our recent National Child Development Study report which demonstrates no difference between averages for comprehensives and selective schools. We were able to take account of each child's ability and social class at the age of 11, before the start of secondary school. Marks *et al.* on the other hand, had no measure of children's academic ability at 11, and their only indicator of social class was a gross measure of the population of each local authority as a whole (on the basis of which i.e.s. were grouped into three broad bands, making, as

John Gray pointed out (TES, July 8), an even more gross measure). Obviously, schools will vary within an i.e.s., in the mixture of 11 year-olds they receive.

We cannot tell from the figures produced by Marks *et al.* how far the examination results reflect differences between the children which already existed before secondary school. Presumably, the Department of Education and Science recognized the inadequacy of local authority-based measures of social class for investigations of school effects; similar information has been available for years but for evidence on this important question they commissioned our work using the longitudinal National Child Development Study.

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Territorial plunder

Sir - To my surprise, I hear increasing murmurs in our neck of the woods of amalgamating the individual science disciplines under the one roof of integrated science.

Trying to put aside one's feelings of territorial plunder in an attempt to see that this really is progress, I have discussed this amalgamation with colleagues - of those who have been in favour there has been no further justification than "I feel it in my water." I am very concerned that, in a vacuum, gimmickry does not become dominant. The present vacuum perhaps being the suspicion that science curricula in the past have contributed to Britain's industrial plight.

If criticism is to be levelled at the teaching of science (and physics in particular) it must be that it has concentrated on theoretical aspects and has failed to make the connection with technology. This, in my view, does not mean that the theoretical side should be reduced but that additional time should be established in the curriculum for technology so that these two aspects enhance each other.

My suspicion of new ideas remains unless logical arguments can be put forward. I would hate to think that integrated science at examination level is pushed along on a bandwagon similar to the open plan classroom campaign in secondary schools which took place a few years ago.

K HUGHES
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Shropshire



Microcomputers: used correctly, a treat for primary school pupils

Data dreams

Sir - Anita Straker's letter about the Microelectronics Education Programme's plans for microcomputers in primary schools (TES, July 1) may cause some alarm if taken seriously.

The idea that there can be no "improper" use of microcomputers in the primary classroom is so naive as to be dangerous. Anita Straker says that she can envisage nothing worse than schools concentrating on a limited range of uses. I regret that I can conjure up a far worse vision with hardly any effort. In my worst case, children are sent to sit in front of a microcomputer and are left to repeat exercise after exercise with the kind of

mind-numbing indifference of which only computers are capable. The machines are used as part treat, part torture for children, where the teacher is sufficiently uninvolved in the use of the computer and the software is sufficiently crude that the child's needs and abilities are ignored by all concerned. At its very worst my imagination creates a nightmare in which many of the advances by primary schools over the last 30 years are set to naught in the name of technological progress.

It is depressing that the mediocre contribution that the MEP Micro Primer pack has made so far is likely to be their best effort if Anita Straker is to be believed.

However, I also have a much better alternative vision of the future. In this dream the microcomputer becomes an integral part of the child's learning. It is a tool for handling data and information which is relevant to the child's experience. It is an open-ended learning environment where the child creates his or her own problems, develops solutions and then assesses and improves those solutions. It is a vehicle for developing language and logic which, with the right software under the care and guidance of a well-trained teacher, creates learning opportunities beyond our wildest dreams.

Which of these dreams becomes a reality in any particular school will depend entirely on the availability of good, open-ended software, and in-service training for the teachers at that school. It is obvious that the MEP is seriously underfunded for the job in hand. It is disturbing that, as a result, the director of its primary project appears to be prepared to accept anything in the name of computer based education.

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FEATURES

THE FORGOTTEN WORLD

As much of Latin America celebrates the bicentenary of its liberation, Jack Cross looks at the way schools ignore this increasingly important area



Simon Bolívar (above left); South American was past and present and part of Bolívar's future (right).



I may not mean much to students familiar only with Che Guevara, Castro and *Evita*, or to schoolboys whose knowledge of South America includes little more than the nationality of Oswaldo Ardiles and the fact that Argentina is peripatetic, but July 24 marks the Bicentenary of Simon Bolívar. Most of the celebrations will be confined to those countries like Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela, which owe their independence to The Liberator. If it doesn't go unnoticed in Britain, this is largely due to the activities of the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Council, usually referred to by the name of its London base, Canning House.

The centrepiece of the Canning House programme is an exhibition of pictures organized by the Central Office of Information on behalf of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and open to the public until September 9.

Diplomatic focus has been on Belgrave Square; the Duke of Kent and a number of Latin American dignitaries placed wreaths there, under the Bolívar statue, on June 24. This was the anniversary of the crucial Battle of Carabobo, in which a British Legion (mostly veterans of Wellington's Peninsular campaigns) played an important part.

Sir Geoffrey Howe, the new Foreign Secretary, made one of his first public speeches in connexion with this event. He specifically rejected the notion that it was a "fence-mending" operation after the Falklands conflict. The objective was to re-secure and strengthen existing friendships with the Latin American countries. "It plainly indicates that we attach real importance to our relationships with them and the Bolívar celebrations provide a convenient and agreeable opportunity of making that clear."

Since 1943 the Hispanic Council has been putting on lectures, films, concerts and exhibitions. It has the largest lending library in Britain specializing in Iberian and Latin American affairs. It runs language courses and sets examinations, offering prizes to pupils and fellowships to teachers and provides the main thrust for Spanish studies in this country. Few in the field, however, believe that Latin American studies are a priority, or even a necessity, for the majority of schools.

Dr Harold Blackmore, of London University Institute for Latin American Studies, believes our history courses are scandalously Eurocentric or obsessed with our former Empire. "Most of the press refuses to take the region seriously, except when reporting wars or revolutions. The public sees it as exotic and endearing—chaps sitting round under coffee trees."

Any historian looking towards the future should find the case for more Latin American studies irrefutable. "The continent has the world's most rapidly enlarging population and enormous untapped resources. It has strong historical and contemporary links with the USA and Britain. In the 1970s, Brazil's growth rate equaled that of Japan. Latin America is not really part of the Third World; its problems are those of development—not inertia."

A British Overseas Trade Board report says we ought to learn more languages. "Many of

Britain's major customers in non-English-speaking markets... are unlikely to react favourably to an approach made in English... major competitors regard knowledge of the language as a necessary condition for commercial success." A leaflet issued by the Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese quotes a survey which states that for commercial reasons alone the teaching of such languages should be increased by 350 per cent.

Patricia Semple, head of the Canning House education department, widens the argument. "Latin America provides a lot of good examples of development in association with geography, and of the history of conquest and independence movements. Financially, it is a microcosm of the rest of the world. It has a lot of energetic modern literature; the works of the Nobel Prize winner, Gabriel García Márquez, particularly appeal to intelligent senior pupils." And, of course, the region has been much in the news. "Since the Falklands, people have been discovering how little they actually know about it." This factor can work both ways. Teachers in schools where Spanish studies are well-established have encountered resistance to "learning the language of our enemies."

The Hispanic Council has identified 16 topics which should appeal to 16-19 year-olds. They range from "Discovery and Conquest", through the independence movements (with emphasis on British involvement), Perón, the Cuban revolution, to the rise and fall of Allende and a study of the army in relation to the politics of Central and South America. For younger children, they have put on lectures by the producer of BBC's *The Flight of the Condor* and participants in Operation Drake, as well as demonstrations of folk music and dance.

Working parties have analysed examination syllabuses. While Latin America is not yet a separate exam subject, O level history papers frequently include optional questions on Cuba and the missile crisis, on US relations with South America and/or modern developments in the Caribbean and Latin America; London University Board includes this last subject in its A level options.

Geographers can also cover South America in preparing for their regional papers at O and A/O levels, though not everyone supports the examination boards' apparent notion that Latin America is an exemplar of conditions in the less-developed world.

All the Boards offer examinations in Spanish, however, and include Latin American texts in their literature papers at A level. Language is obviously the key to wider studies. Writing ten years ago, F J Poppleton observed that most support for teaching Latin American history came from teachers of Spanish. "History teachers themselves clearly regard Latin America as a peripheral area which comes very low on their list of interests."

DES figures show that each year something like 14,000 candidates are entered for Spanish O level and 2,500 at A level. But the numbers are likely to fall as all second languages come under pressure and get squeezed out. Opinions on the effect of this squeeze differ. One specialist HMI says that when a subject turns up as a fourth or fifth year option—sometimes with a one-year crash course to A level to follow—it has to become restrictively linguistic. Ann Scott, of Essex University, has observed, however, that second language teachers on the defensive often widen their courses to encourage enrolment.

The private sector continues to show some interest. Winchester is the only school in the country offering a course in Brazilian Portuguese. On the list of awards made by the

When I was a pupil, English meant written English. Books were read, compositions written and clauses analysed ad nauseam. Apart from the occasional debate, or end-of-term *Any Questions* game, spoken English was something which happened in the playground or at home—anywhere but in the classroom. I was, in fact, one of the first pupils to take the optional London GCE O level spoken English, but it was emphasized that this would make no difference to our written grade (the one that really mattered); it would simply be an endorsement on our certificates for anyone who might be eccentric enough to be interested.

How times have changed. We live in a society which puts far greater emphasis on our oral resources than our literary. Many of our pupils will never have to write anything of significance after they leave school; they will all have to deal with the spoken word—actively and passively—every day of their lives. No self-respecting English teacher today would deny this: the oral element of English is overwhelmingly and undeniably its most important component.

This being so, it is surely right that oral English should, in some way, be assessed and examined. As members of a society which

English as she is examined

The spoken word is too important to be included in a single English grade at 16 plus argues Melvyn Elphes

judges us in accordance with our knowledge and performance in every field of human endeavour, we surely have a right to an assessment on our achievement in this most basic and essential of all our endeavours.

CSE boards have recognized this from the beginning, and several O level syllabuses have followed suit: the oral component is now, rightly, a significant part of many exams, and those which ignore it have a distinctly old-fashioned air, fossilized in an obsolete age before the telephone or mass media.

Now, with 16 plus syllabuses being devised, the urge towards oral examination is reaching a new universality—something teachers, parents, employers and pupils should applaud.

Yet it is at this point that I find myself enraged, frustrated and hostile. For as any teacher without a vested interest will declare,

oral exams have one significant flaw: they don't work. Whether we use group discussion, individual interview, continuous assessment or whatever, there are so many variable factors dependent on non-linguistic elements and attitudes that a valid assessment is impossible to come by. Year after year, teachers of CSE are alarmed to find a grade 5 pupil emerging as grade 3 after he "chatted up the oral examiner", while less brash candidates freeze to non-communication in interview and so achieve a misleadingly low final grade. Yet even this is false: the classroom-based assessment where variable atmospheres, disciplinary problems, teacher stability and group dynamics all contribute to an assessment of only limited truth.

Now none of this seems to me sufficient reason to jettison oral examinations altogether:

their presence focuses the attention of pupils, teachers, parents and employers on the importance of this most important of all subjects, and that is worth a large number of individual misjudgments and false weightings. But I have received recently a circular from the Southern Regional Examinations Board urging all concerned to insist that the oral grade should be incorporated with other English skills in a single overall-grade for 16-plus certificates. I am alarmed to find this view supported by the National Association for the Teaching of English, though I have not met a single English teacher who agrees. CSE has already proved the misleading nature of such results.

What is needed is a separate oral assessment, advocated by the Joint Council for the 16-plus national criteria and by vast numbers of silent, busy teachers. In this way, an employer or any

Hispanic Council as a result of examinations in either the languages or general knowledge of South America, the names of Eton, Roadean, Kimbolton and Downside appear with monotonous regularity.

Maintained schools which offer Spanish-related studies seem to be concentrated in particular areas. There is a long-standing tradition in Liverpool and Southampton, probably for historical and commercial reasons. Other clusters appear in Northern Ireland, Yorkshire, London (where the subject is particularly strong) and Cornwall.

At Redruth Comprehensive they introduce about 100 of the less able children in Spanish in the third year and add more capable ones in the fourth; all go on to O level, some to A. Lower down the school they take in a lot of background information so that, in the sixth, they can discuss Latin American history and politics.

The master in charge, Geoffrey Grigg, says, "Subjects like El Salvador are tricky to handle but we use a lot of newspapers and our part-time Venezuelan assistant is able to put a lot of the news into perspective."

In spite of the cuts and the desperately unfavourable rates of South American currencies there are, according to the records of the Central Bureau for Educational Exchanges, 16 such assistants in UK schools and colleges.

ILEA's Learning Materials Service has published its own 12-unit multi-media Spanish courses for beginners. *Clara* is designed primarily for 12/13 year-olds but has, with modifications, been used from the first to the sixth form. Each unit contains its *Hispanorama* section, which puts the language study into a cultural context. The compilers, Amanda Ralinger and Hetty Soukias, have deliberately drawn upon sources other than mainland Spain. One of the units features the life and times of Simon Bolívar.

Back in 1962 the Parry Committee looked into what existed in British universities which could be called Latin American studies and found very little. At its recommendation to the UGC, five Parry Centres were set up in Cambridge, Glasgow, Liverpool, Oxford and London (Kings). Since then, each has waxed or waned in significance and many other bodies now offer specialized and joint courses.

In a report published by the Hispanic Council, Dr Blackmore gives a lot of space to Essex University's unique contribution to "a community of scholarship between Britain and South America." Essex offers Latin America as one of the regions of study in the School of Comparative Studies in a four-year first degree involving art and architecture, government and economics, history, literature or sociology. In most British universities it is, in fact, a second degree subject.

Ealing College of HE is particularly well known for its combined language/economics/politics/history course. It tends to be Mexico-oriented, as does the one at Portsmouth Polytechnic, which frequently sends its exchange students to work in the Mexico City Town Hall. The Portsmouth course includes topics in Amerindian languages like Quechua, Nahuatl and Guarani.

Teachers in all sectors refer to Canning House as a valuable source of stimulation and resource material. In these tricky times, they are reassured by the Council's non-official status, which means that it can act as honest broker in fostering all kinds of interest in the Latin American world.

other user of the certificate (including the pupil) can give to the oral and written components weightings that are relevant to any particular situation: a combined grade can only represent confusion as to the award holder's relative abilities in different aspects of English.

The argument runs that English is one subject, not two. How very simplistic; science is one subject, not four; life itself is a unity, not a series of unrelated separatisms. Our whole education system depends on the sub-division of the whole into its various parts for greater ease of development and identification. Why should oral English be considered "undervalued" if it is treated in this way? Neither would it lead to unrealistic separation in teaching. English teachers are fully awake to the need to teach unitary English: that need not imply a woolly, all-purpose exam leading to a single, distorted grade.

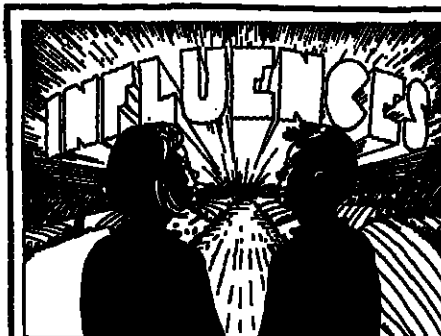
Oral English is here to stay. Let us welcome it and work at improving our techniques of assessment, not bring it into disrepute as a means of distorting otherwise reliable examination results into a meaningless and misleading hotch-pot of invalid gradings.

Dr Melvyn Elphes is head of English at City of Portsmouth Boys' School.

FEATURES

Dear Angela...

There is an enormous demand for explicit information about ourselves and our bodies Angela Willans, the women's magazine agony aunt, tells Hugh David



influences... a new series in *The TES* about people outside education who may have an influence on the way young people think and act. Next week: Malcolm McLaren, high priest of punk.

In the first three months of this year, Angela Willans told me, she received—and answered—precisely 5,615 letters. Well, not personally, you understand; she is editor of the problem page on *Woman's Own* magazine and has a staff of five full-time helpers to do that, but 5,615 letters had been received, 5,615 problems had been sympathetically considered and 5,615 personally-written replies dispatched. Her advice column is the most popular and widely-read feature in *Woman's Own*, easily beating the glossy profiles of Joan Collins ("How do I look so good? I enjoy myself"), the recipes, the knitting patterns and even the fiction. Ninety-six per cent of the magazine's readers look at it; getting on for 500 people a week—60 a day—actually write to it with problems and preoccupations as wide-ranging and various as society itself?

Angela Willans had just received the regular statistical breakdown. She leafed through it, calling out figures. Of those 5,615 letters 78 had been about lack of confidence, an equal number about loneliness. They were the most common subjects. Another 69 letters had described medical symptoms, 49 were sex education queries from young people, 45 concerned stress and nervous conditions, 20 had referred to venereal disease. . . . The list was endless, spreading over several sheets of typescript. Down near the bottom came the less common subjects: 10 letters about premature ejaculation, another 10—including some from male readers—about homosexuality.

A steady 5 per cent of her letters come from men, Angela Willans says—while at least 25 per cent are written by teenagers. She doesn't mind; every one, even if she suspects it to be a spoof, is answered.

A former teacher, one-time shop assistant and canteen waitress, she has been *Woman's Own's* "agony aunt" for 30 years (having previously fulfilled the same function on the old *Daily Herald*) and does not in the least mind the description. Until 1981 she wrote under the *Woman's Own* "house name" of Mary Grant, the longest-serving in a long line of Mary Grants. Now it's "The Angela Willans Problem Page", topped by her photograph, at the back of the magazine alongside Leon Petulengro's "Star-scope" and Dr Michael Smith's "Surgery".

Divorced and with two grown-up daughters, she is an attractive, middle-aged woman. She wears trousers and boots, carries a shoulder-bag and pushes a pair of owl-shaped glasses up on to her forehead while she is talking. Not so breathlessly free with the "lovers" and "darlings" as her *Woman's Own* colleague Claire Rayner, she is nevertheless equally committed to her work. "When I first started it was all a bit of a giggle", she admits, "but it's changed so much in the last few years."

No more, it seems, are agony aunts just well-meaning do-gooders. The staff of the *Woman's Own* problem page and confidential counselling service liaise extensively with other

helping agencies and attend professional conferences and courses. Angela Willans herself serves on the executive of the National Marriage Guidance Council (the only advice columnist to do so), the board of the National Council for One-Parent Families and the board of the Brook Advisory Centres. The study in her home at Henley-on-Thames is lined with alphabetically arranged box-files of reference material. She chooses one at random: "R" contains information about race, rape, relations and retirement.

Everything became more professional. Agony aunts and problem pages are now recognized and accepted by other advice and counselling services. And, Angela Willans has noticed, the problems they are asked to deal with have changed too, particularly over the last decade. Yes, she says, she receives more letters from teenage girls these days; and, yes, they're not saying "Should I sleep with my boyfriend" any more, but increasingly "I am sleeping with my boyfriend—what now?"

It would be unfair and a distortion to say she welcomes this change, but certainly the more morally and ethically complex problem she is confronted with today are of greater interest to her than the sackfuls of "Should I or shouldn't I?" letters she received a decade ago. She describes herself as a humanist (and is a member of the British Humanist Association) and this has a great influence on her work. "I am here to open out problems, not close them in", she says. "It's not my job to supply the full stop and say. Yes, go ahead or No, don't be so stupid. I prefer to try to help people find the answer that's right for them". But she is also aware of the limits of her influence. Her suggested solution, she knows only too well, will either be accepted, purely "because Angela Willans says so", or rejected for exactly the same reason: "that damn old biddy says I shouldn't, so I damn well will!"

Nevertheless, what she calls "situational ethics" govern her responses—doing what honestly seems right in each specific case rather than just applying a dogmatic moral code. "It's not a lot of use telling a pregnant 16-year-old schoolgirl that she's been silly or naughty or wicked. What she needs is help in facing the situation as it stands. I am interested in helping that particular person at that particular minute with the problem that she's in".

It is this reluctance to condemn which has led to accusations that Angela Willans "encourages permissiveness" and "is in favour of sleeping around". Nonsense, she replies. "Girls are going

Teenagers have sex for much the same reasons as adults—for the loving arms, the warmth, the reassurance, the skin-to-skin communication the relief from tension and the celebration of love

Group complain about as much as her honest views about lesbianism, male homosexuality, divorce and many other topics. They claim that she, together with organizations like the Brook Advisory Clinics and Gay Switchboard, is undermining the family; and that books she champions, like Jane Cousins' sex handbook for teenagers *Make It Happy* (described in a *TES* review as "wholesome, classless... gentle and honest in its intentions") are "obscene", "disturbing" and "disgraceful".

Angela Willans can understand their views, but not sympathize with them. "Their concern seems always to take the form of attempts to control, repress and denigrate what is already being done", she says. In a magazine article last year she went on to characterize what she sees as their stance: "They want sex to be about nice, mature people doing the nice, mature things at the right time with the right person—a middle-class, simplistic, nursery fireside image of sex which has nothing to do with an erect penis or the longing to love and be loved."

It is this which annoys her most. The Responsible Society and her other critics, she believes, are simply refusing to accept the world as it is, the world her correspondents are living in. "Everyone who hears at first hand the cries for help from youngsters in sexual confusion or trouble knows that they don't seek sex because they want to defy their elders or are persuaded into it by 'irresponsible' counsellors, authors and agony aunts", she went on. "Teenagers have sex for much the same reasons as adults—for the loving arms, the warmth, the reassurance, the skin-to-skin communication, the relief from tension and the celebration of love."

The first three words are the most important: "teenagers have sex". It's no use saying they don't—and even worse saying they shouldn't—Angela Willans believes; they simply do and will go on doing so. We have first to accept that and they try to make the best of it—by ensuring that they at least know what they are doing and how best to avoid unforeseen or ill-considered consequences.

Hence, says Angela Willans unrepentantly, her forthright stance and her advice column. "There is still an enormous demand, from people of all ages and at all levels of education, for honest, explicit information about ourselves, our bodies and our minds."

It is particularly important that young people—boys as well as girls—receive this, she believes. "Ignorance, far from keeping youngsters innocent and therefore 'safe', puts them at risk of unlimited exploitation by the better-informed." If she can help to prevent this, she feels, then she is doing her job properly. "We've got to watch over each other," she says, coming back to her liberal-humanist convictions, "because I don't think there's anyone else doing it."



TALKBACK

Heads need examining

BERNARD EMBLEM

Lynton Gray and Ian Watt's *Platform* article "If you want to get a head..." (TES, June 24) discusses some of the general principles to be taken into account when devising courses for headteachers.

I would like to see junior members of staff brought into the debate. They are particularly qualified to comment since it is they who suffer when heads make mistakes.

Gray and Watt rightly suggest that the "improvement needs" of schools should be a major factor in determining the content of such courses. Here

are my suggestions for specific areas I would like to see covered under this heading:

- How and when to contact outside agencies and other schools, especially the support services for children with special needs and the special schools themselves; many heads have had little contact with these agencies, seem unaware of their role, and use their services ineffectively.
- Interviewing and selection of candidates, another specialized area for which there is often no training; areas to be covered would include analysis of references and application forms, criteria for selecting a short list, and interviewing techniques.
- Management of change: each head needs to develop a personal style of leadership, but should do so with an awareness of the likely effects, and of the effectiveness of recognized management techniques, such as group

dynamics.

- Staff training: not only heads suffer from lack of training. Many probationers and newly appointed senior staff are still left to fend for themselves. Heads should be aware of the need to manage training, and should be trained to do so.
- Internal relationships: heads often find it difficult to penetrate the internal workings of their school. Their training should emphasize the importance of good internal relationships and show how to recognize and deal with danger signs such as the early symptoms of stress.
- Self-evaluation: this would include the ability to make objective evaluations of one's own effectiveness, that of other members of staff, and that of the school.

Bernard Emblem is deputy head at Firwood School, Bolton.



Computer diploma

ANDREW FLUCK AND PETER LOUD

The computer is increasingly the tool of everyone from manager to clerk. For every single trained programmer/analyst using a micro, there will soon be 50 to 100 general users who treat it with the familiarity of a typewriter or calculator. It has therefore been necessary to reassess the computer training requirements appropriate to school leavers.

In Milton Keynes the Education-Industry Liaison Committee, made up of senior industrialists and educationalists, has proposed a new diploma concentrating on the application of microcomputers in business. The proposal stems from the training approach of the information technology centres, in which emphasis is given to work-related skills, rather than the traditional academic approach of teaching to exam syllabuses found in most schools. The new scheme of work combines familiarity with particular software packages with an understanding of the general functions they can perform.

The Milton Keynes Diploma in Microcomputer Applications is aimed at the one-year sixth-former. However, we recognize that the structure and modularity of the course may well make it suitable for many other groups. Sixteen to seventeen-year-old pupils should be able to complete the syllabus in 30 to 40 hours of instruction, with a small amount of time for practice on the machines. At the end of the course students should:

- Have confidence in operating micro-computers and associated equipment.
- Be familiar with the terminology associated with the business use of microcomputers.
- Be able to use a variety of micro-computer business packages.
- Be able to select appropriate software to fulfil a variety of business tasks.
- Have carried out a project demonstrating their ability to perform a business task.

Although the format and content of this diploma may seem to be far removed from the classroom, schools can get the necessary software for the course for existing computers. For instance, Gemini produces packages for the BBC micro at about £20 each to cover the sections of the diploma. Similar programs can be obtained for the Apple and Pet. There is a broad range of educational software available for the RML 3802, and one can always use a commercial CPM package.

So far the syllabus has been well received in Milton Keynes and we have had requests from Hants, Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire for copies. A group of heads of schools from all the city's secondary schools has met, and we are now devising assessment methods for each section. These may include instructor checklists and specific tests, probably resulting in a specimen printout from the microcomputer for each student.

A natural development of the testing procedure could well employ the microcomputer in marking sections of work automatically.

So far six of the eight schools have indicated that they will be running diploma courses this coming year, representing more than 100 students. It has been suggested by our industry colleagues that the scheme would form an excellent basis for a course taken by managers and other staff. We are sure that the diploma could be of benefit in most schools and invite others to participate by commenting upon and using the scheme. After initial development and trials we would hope to obtain suitable national validation.

Andrew Fluck is head of computing at Stonyhurst Campus, Milton Keynes; MK14 6BN and Peter Loud is the manager of the Milton Keynes Information Technology Centre, 1000, Milton Keynes, 1, Epsom Road, Stacey Park, Milton Keynes.

New training outcasts

DAVID HUNT

Although the special needs category of student has made the breakthrough from special schools to colleges of FE, some local authorities have only paid lip service to the commitment, and senior college staff can too easily fall back on "lack-of-resources" when accused of not making adequate provision for the educationally underprivileged.

Educationally sub-normal children do not have much to contribute in the struggle for exam kudos; neither do they provide dramatic illustrations of how the handicapped can overcome appalling hurdles with hardware provided by a local authority. Their hurdles are the humdrum coping skills, the absence of which kept them in institutions for centuries.

Lack of social skills, fear and ignorance kept them segregated. The educational sub-normal have to leave special schools at 16 when their needs in the real world can no longer be met by the special provisions of the special schools.

There is a real danger that the MSC's Youth Training Scheme will exacerbate this situation. Whenever MSC talks courses, college adminis-

trators lick their lips greedily and prepare to shed the expensive courses paid for by local authorities.

It is a very easy way of coping with directives from their masters to cut back. Courses for the ESN are low status and are consequently extremely vulnerable. The MSC insists on a heavy work experience element in the YTS. With a labour market that has in excess of three million on the streets, it is unrealistic to train the ESN in transferrable skills gained in a work placement.

Even in a stable market with full employment the attitude of employers is likely to be patronizing, because they sense the inability to cope with travel, budgeting and socialization.

The less able first need to learn how to cope with the move away from the special institutions. If they remain at the bottom of the hierarchical pile in the colleges, and fail to meet the criteria of the MSC, much of the philosophy and idealism of the Warnock committee will be destroyed.

It would be a disgraceful indictment of our society if this growth area is stunted.

The media recently made much of a story about traders in a holiday resort who complained of a fall-off in trade, because there were too many handicapped holiday makers in the area.

At establishments displaying the same thinly disguised prejudice and fail to meet the needs of the ESN.

David Hunt is tutor on a special development course at Boston College of FE, Lincolnshire.

Inadequate interviews

ROBIN DUFF

As a student teacher I have had a number of interviews for jobs. But at none of them has the head of department been present, surely the person to whom the selection of the right candidate is of paramount importance. As a result, teaching methods are not mentioned, and syllabuses are skimmed over.

At my last interview, I was not even conducted round the school by the head of department, my only real contact coming over the school lunch - not the ideal place to discuss our mutual suitability.

Increasingly, potential probationers are aware that not only are they taking on a job, but quite probably a whole career at one school. Yet we are expected to make this vital decision having spent a few hours in the morning being shown round the school, without meeting with the head of department on his own.

On two occasions I have been given the school prospectus on my arrival, and the afternoon we are expected to have made our decision. Our doubts are put to one side, as tutors' advice of "take whatever comes" and the fear of losing one's expenses, no mean sum for students if it includes an overnight stay, takes control.

Generally, we are unlikely to be introduced to teachers (of our subject or see any pupils' work. We are shown the excellent woodwork facilities (of our subject) and these are given the same amount of viewing time as our own potential workplaces.

My last interview was a disappointment. I quickly realized that the job description in the advertisement did not tie in with the requirements given at interview. However, the successful candidate told me that he had managed to get a job description from his tutor. All those actually interviewed had an address, a map and the original advertisement.

The worst part of the day is the waiting. For an interview of 30 minutes, the candidates are left waiting for around three to five hours. At only one of my interviews was it suggested

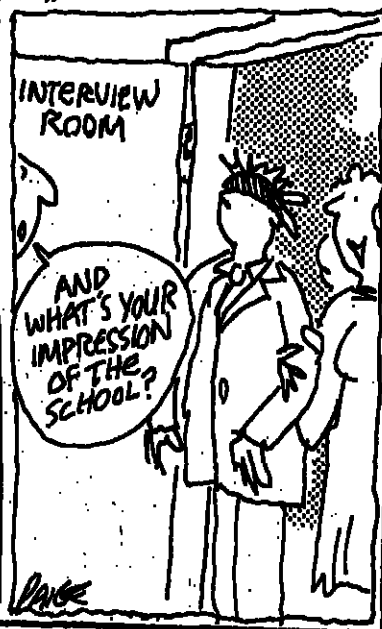
that the candidates could move from the room given, and see the school unescorted - potentially, the most illuminating part of the day.

Every interviewee I have met thinks the system of keeping everybody waiting painful and embarrassing. Neither can it be much fun for the unfortunate who has to break the news to the unsuccessful candidates.

I appreciate the pressing needs of schools to fill posts; I am aware of the job round that goes on, and that candidates can mess schools around waiting for the next one. Yet, can schools not look at more sensitive ways of handling interviews, which might even be more beneficial to them in the search for the right person? Perhaps a system could be devised whereby the candidates have their interview at a specific time, after which they can leave. This would give the candidates an opportunity to look round the area, which is often impossible to do with late finishes and a long trip home.

The following day, those interviewed would call the school (by agreement), to be told either yes or no, with perhaps an explanation as to why they failed. This way there would be less pressure and more time to make sure that any decision made is the right one.

Robin Duff is a student teacher in Sheffield.



Trust the child

JOHN ELENOR

Brian Tyler's review of *Flying Into The Wind* (TES July 1) predictably sided with compulsory schooling. And yet his justifications of it stem from wilful misinterpretation of the content.

He condemns, for instance, "the arrogance, the selfishness, the cruelty and disposition of parents who use their children in this way to express and embody their own deepest fears and society's worst grounds does he have for this condemnation that do not equally apply to those parents - a rather larger minority - who continue to force their children to school despite the appalling illnesses (migraine, eczema, asthma, etc) induced by any

unsympathetic environment, simply in order to conform? What is there in the film to suggest that the Wyatts are "using" their child in this way? I remember no indications that Michael was unhappy with the family life-style, or had expressed a wish to go to school, or felt in any way inferior to his school-going contemporaries.

His "maladroitness at the things he is supposed to have learned" is an excellent example, paradoxically, of the superiority of his education. In school his lack of success on the trip to the lake would have been castigated and probably scorned by his teacher, who would have tried hard - to make the best possible motives - to make the boy ashamed; the feeling of shame (as psychologists well know) would inhibit any further learning in this area, as well as undermining his self-confidence.

Under his parents' tutelage, however, he is in a position to learn from his mistakes, and "retain" the self-confidence and how which enables him to

keep command of the situation (which is more than the judge can do), and eventually produce a hot bath, dry clothes, and cocoa. How many schooled children could have done as well?

Tyler's most important misconception (perhaps not wilful) concerns Michael's reading ability; he declares in fact that "if he had always gone to school he would have been able to read". Doubtless about this there is (alas) no certainty about this for any child, as the back-to-basics brigade are always reminding us; and Michael, moreover, is diagnosed, like his older sister, as severely dyslexic, a condition in which reading-readiness does not develop until adolescence.

The children whose educational history inspired this film have all learned to read in their teens, with very little difficulty, over a very brief period of time; there is no reason to think that any other severely dyslexic child, treated with the same love and understanding, would not respond in

the same way. It is not certain whether such a child would ever develop enough reading fluency to enable him to become "a solicitor or a doctor"; it is certain that the stress-inducing, continual competitive side-glances and subtle suggestions of failure, would effectively prevent him. It is precisely the "equipping of our children to cope with industrial society" that most schools are failing to do, how can it possibly make sense to condemn a system such as the Wyatts', that develops self-esteem, self-awareness, intellectual curiosity and above all, adaptability? "Follow the child" - or more fundamentally "Trust the child" - has been the cry of every great educator; anyone who has seen it working knows that there is no real alternative.

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REVIEW

Waiting for the frisson

Ludovic Kennedy on television news



Sir Geoffrey Cox

Brian Walden

Sir Robin Day

lack the other.

Although Geoffrey Cox came to ITN with a distinguished record in journalism, his success there was as manipulator and entrepreneur. He was never short of problems - the parsimony of the programme companies, the unhelpfulness of the ITA, coping with the likes of Robin Day and the mercurial news editor, Arthur Clifton.

But he seemed to enjoy it. I see him now, standing in his office, leaning slightly as if under sail, chinking the coins in his trouser pocket, smiling quizzically, containing - and in his clipped New Zealand accent eventually resolving - whatever problem was put before him. (I can also see Robin Day doing a brilliant imitation of this.)

Geoffrey's book is as sunny as his disposition. I never once heard him raise his voice in

my two years with him; nor does he in these pages. If there was anyone in ITN he didn't like or whose work he found wanting, he does not let us know of it. His lively, generous account of those pioneering days will be invaluable for television's future historians; and it is a tribute to his persistence and patience that in the end he was rewarded with the half-hour bulletin at prime time for which he had so long fought.

I wish I could be as complimentary about Michael Tracey's book, because it is well-researched and well-written (though £8.95 for a 157-page pictureless paperback is surely outrageous). But *Weekend World* is not ITN and who, apart from those in it, wishes to be plied with accounts of the internal memos, self-doubts and analyses, gropings towards a policy that characterized this - or any other -

minority programme's formative years? Of what interest is it to be told of the blinding discovery of John Birt, the programme's first editor, that balance of payments, trades unions, wages, etc are all connected, or that language is the only way to deal with abstract ideas? In fact, Mr Birt must have been a good deal more on the ball than as presented here.

A problem aired in both books is the concern shared by Cox, Birt, Jay and many others that television, by emphasizing the visual, can distort or trivialize what is being imparted - that it can, in Birt's and Jay's famous phrase, create "a bias against understanding".

I have never felt much empathy with this view. Because television reaches millions simultaneously, its practitioners have tended to attach to it (and sometimes regrettably to themselves) an importance and influence which it simply does not possess. Essentially it is the most superficial medium, the images on the screen dying as one looks at them, like the ever-changing view from the window of an express train.

It is therefore pointless to try and make television do what it is quite ill-fitted to do, ie satisfy the intellect as much as the eye. It is by its nature a medium of sensation rather than thought. For thought we can turn to the daily and weekly papers, magazines, books, the radio, friends. In its coverage of human affairs television may be a jack of all trades; but in exposition it is far more restricted than print.

It would seem that the makers of *Weekend World* have come to believe that by having arrived at their present successful formula, they have somehow succeeded in lessening the emphasis of the visual. But this is impossible: television is the visual. The reason we tune in to Walden and Bragg, Day and Dimbleby, Magee and Miller, is not primarily to be better informed, but because the quality of their minds, the individuality of their approach and the unpredictability of the outcome, make them exciting people to watch. There could be a *frisson* and if so, we want to see it happen. Geoffrey Cox's title is right.

Shorn locks

DAN JONES on Clive James's latest non-novel

Brilliant Creatures. By Clive James. Cape £7.95. 224 02122 2.

Clive James is very self-conscious; but then he has a great deal to be self-conscious about. *Brilliant Creatures* is presented by the publishers as "Clive James's first novel" - the work of a man who was "President of Footlights" at Cambridge. A stranger to James, opening the book at random, might suppose it to be in the not-so-great tradition of young graduates seeking glittering prizes in swinging London and then "seeing through" the hollow social scene: it is full of crowded parties, noisy with smart jokes about fashion and high culture. But Clive James is too mature and successful for this boyish sport. He is already famous as a witty television reviewer and performer; he also has a reputation to maintain as a man of letters, a bit of a scholar. But a novelist is expected (in John Fowles's words) either to "sound true" or to "come clean", if not both.

So James has evaded the challenge. Before his non-story begins he offers quotations from Dante, Yeats and Malory. Then there is an introduction: "This book is my second attempt to avoid writing a novel. The first, called *Unreliable Memoirs*, I got away with by labelling as an autobiography." When the non-story has finished, there are 30 pages of notes and a 15-page index, attributed to Peter Bartelski. Sir Walter Scott used to attribute his more boring footnotes to a scholar called Dr Dryasdust. But Clive James is no Walter Scott, for he offers no plot, no characters, no point.

The non-story begins with a man called Lancelot Windhorse (and we are supposed to think of a poem by G. M. Hopkins). Instead we may remember P. G. Wodehouse and his character, Lancelot Mulliner. *Brilliant Creatures* could be thought of as a plotless Wode-

house, dirtied up in the fashion of the sixties. Lancelot Windhorse lashes out at a dog with a bit of carpet stuck up its bum" and Wodehouse readers recall Lancelot Mulliner's involvement with fighting cats; but those cats had character and their fight had point; the manspreading of the plot. The high-culture allusions and similes are almost Wodehousian; but there are too many and they are too recondite. "London!" cries James, "Whose gritty actuality was turned by your windscreen wipers into grisaille fans on which no Mallarmé would ever write a poem or Conder paint a pink Arcadia!" Look them up in the notes, boys.

Clive James does, however, maintain his reputation as a rigorous critic of other men's haircuts. His television reviews have often resembled a barber's-shop floor, sparkling with shorn locks, rejected hair-dressings. While others admire Bobby Charlton's footwork, Clive James assails his head, seeing the skull beneath the strands. There is one good haircut at the grand parties in *Brilliant Creatures* - worthy of Roy Fuller himself. It belongs to the aply-named Sir Horace Temple-Grey: "His grey hair was of giving it a separate knighthood all on its own." But the tone is lowered by the entry of a common photographer; "whose hairstyle, razored to follicle level, resembled a peeled hard-boiled egg which had been dotted all over with a blue ball-point pen". The narrator cannot bear this sort "with the blue-speckled alopecia". James is no less severe with another comically-named figure, Dick Toole, an ill-educated gossip columnist who confuses "flaunt" with "flout" and "mitigate" with "mitigate". When not telling tales about the toffs, Toole, tools around in his bedroom, satirically torturing his girlfriend, Miss Ball-Hunt. Why is he doing this? Her first name is Delleh. Maybe she gave him a rotten haircut.

The Great Extinction. By Michael Allaby and James Lovelock. Secker and Warburg £10.95. 436 01160 3. The Ultimate Fate of the Universe. By J. N. Islam. Cambridge University Press £7.95. 521 24814 0.

Taking things chronologically *The Great Extinction* deals with the events some 65 million years ago that saw many species disappear from the face of the Earth, and provides a marker in geological time called the Cretaceous-Tertiary boundary. The dinosaurs were among the species that disappeared then, and although the experts debate just how sudden the disappearance was - they had been in decline for some time - the idea that the Earth was struck by a large meteorite which produced cataclysmic environmental changes has recently had a good press. Jim Lovelock, a scientist best known for his concept of the Earth's biosphere as one living organism, Gaia, and Mike Allaby, a journalist specializing in ecological topics, have combined to provide the best popular account of this theory.

However, the authors themselves acknowledge that the story they have to tell is speculative, and that there is no conclusive evidence that a meteorite impact did indeed cause "the great extinction". But the story they have to tell is consistent, coherent and intriguing. It fits all the facts; and if it isn't true, well, it certainly ought to be.

The story is told, a little self-consciously, as a scientific detective mystery. The "body" of the dinosaurs has been found; rare metals in geological strata provide clues; the detectives piece the evidence together; and so on. That doesn't always work, but the profusion of analogies does - "we are considering an object much larger and heavier than Mount Everest, made from solid rock and metal, approaching the Earth at about 20 times the speed of a high-velocity bullet from a modern army rifle". What has happened before can happen again, and the market appeal of the book is surely to make people shiver in their

boots as they look at the sky and wonder if another Mount Everest is on the way. But while seeking their thrills, the readers will also be introduced relatively painlessly to a lot of good science.

Of course, on a cosmic perspective it is all pretty insignificant. So what if we are struck by a blow from space tomorrow? The Universe will go on with or without us. But will it go on forever? This is the theme taken up by Jamal Islam, of The City University, in *The Ultimate Fate of the Universe*. There is no scope here for shivers up the spine, because the threats are too remote. Indeed, we have a more straightforward, unsensational account of the way things could go if left for long enough. How does a star die? Do black holes last forever? Will the Universe expand eternally, or one day collapse into a fireball like the big bang which gave it birth? The chapters, 14 of them plus an Epilogue in under 150 pages, are short and sharp, well-led with facts and figures; the author's style is pleasingly old-fashioned ("I remind the reader..."). Let us briefly consider... This is just as well, since otherwise it might be hard to remember that this is a book of science fact - or, at least, serious scientific speculation - not science fiction. Readers who enjoyed Paul Davies' recent *The Accidental Universe*, from the same publishers, will find this one right up their street.

So who will read these books? *The Great Extinction* has already notched up a major book club deal, and will sell well on the general book market, but it is also excellent material in an educational context, combining elements of astronomy, geology, geophysics, meteorology and evolutionary biology in the story of the death of the dinosaurs. If that doesn't convince sceptics that science is fun, there's no hope for them. *The Ultimate Fate of the Universe*, by contrast, is more likely to appeal to serious science students out for a bit of fun than to casual readers out for a bit of science. Each good in its way, and both well written; but I suspect that my bookshelf is one of the few where they will sit side by side.

Martin Wiley will offer the services of Versewagon in the car park of the Beehive Shopping Centre in Cambridge: anyone interested will be welcome to bring their own work for discussion with the resident gurus, and to browse through Versewagon's itinerant bookstall. Further details from Laurence Stok on 0223 3575 96.

BOOKS

Modern feelings

Carcanet Press are well-known for their fine list of contemporary poets; they also publish under their Eyfield imprint selections of earlier writers which serve as admirable introductions to the work of often neglected minor figures. Roger Pooley's selection of poetry and prose by George Gascoigne, *The Green Knight* (Carcanet £5.95), rescues for the common reader the work of one of the most interesting of the Elizabethans. Innovative poet, prosodist, dramatist, novelist, Gascoigne has dated surprisingly little: his description of an aroused woman as "thoroughly tickled now in all her veins" could have been coined yesterday.

Carole Weinburg's choice from Gower (John Gower Selected Poetry, Carcanet £3.95) and Bernard O'Donoghue's from Hoccleve (Thomas Hoccleve Selected Poems, Carcanet £3.25) make available tempting selections of two Chaucerians who have both acquired less than just reputations for unreliability. O'Donoghue quotes F.J. Furnivall's admission that "when he took his Hoccleve papers to his holiday farm, he never united the string. Bother Hoccleve where would he come in, with the sunshine, flowers, apple-orchards and harvest about?" This is Furnivall's friend of Kenneth Grahame speaking; but en-

dearing as his candour is, it is unfair to Hoccleve's own candid and remarkably personal, plain-spoken talent. As for "moral Gower" the *Confessio Amantis* will never be popular, but at least in Weinburg's judicious selection from six of its eight books it will not seem too daunting to Chaucer students who need a taste of his great but sober contemporary.

Ken Robinson presents in his selection of Charles Cotton (Selected Poems, Carcanet £3.25) yet another poet whose diction and feelings are surprisingly modern: one in whom ease of manner conveys uneasiness of mood. The last selection of Cotton before Robinson's was Geoffrey Grigson's in the Penguin Poet to Poet series which also provided Thom Gunn's magnificent selection of and essay on Ben Jonson. The response of one poet to another in that series often produced something rather special, as it does in Carcanet's Thomas Gray (Selected Poems, Carcanet £2.50), selected by John Heath-Stubbs. Heath-Stubbs himself is a poet poised between classicism and romanticism, and his introductory essay on Gray is remarkable in its informed sympathy, recommending him above all for his "capacity to touch the heart".

Neil Philip

Not without prejudice

Education: An Introduction. By Harold Loukes, John Wilson and Barbara Cowell. Martin Robertson £12.50. 0 85520 398 9. £4.95. 599 7.

This readable collection of 10 essays on education is in part a memorial to the late Harold Loukes, who was for many years Reader in Education at Oxford University. It has been put together by his colleagues John Wilson and Barbara Cowell, a secondary teacher, and embodies ideas and points of view that were shared by all three co-authors.

At a time when there seems to be little agreement between teachers and employers about conditions of service the first essay, dealing with the notion of "commitment" from the teacher is a very topical one. In it the authors explore what might be the nature of a "Pedagogical Oath", the teacher's equivalent of the Hippocratic Oath, and suggest that it might embrace three key areas. These would be first of all a statement of commitment to the profession and a willingness to be judged by one's peers, though I suspect the authors' stress on teachers' obedience and self-abrogation would evoke a less than enthusiastic re-

sponse at NUT headquarters. Second, teachers would swear a commitment to education itself, which the writers recognize is more problematic than the doctor's obligation to induce health. Third comes a promise not to exploit children.

It was not quite so clear what was involved in some of the other chapters. A section on education and its enemies seems to put the finger on two sources, one external pressure, the other internal corruption. External enemies are not really identified, but they sound like politicians, and the antidote seems to be to give teachers "whatever disciplinary powers they need" over curriculum, finance, organization and teaching methods.

Politicians, however, are democratically elected representatives, and the citizens who pay for a service and provide the customers have certain inalienable rights to be given an account of what goes on, either directly or through their elected representatives. Though the more witless and malevolent politicians are indeed enemies of education, democratic rights are not odious, and deserve more recognition than the reluctant nod they are given here.

E C Wragg

Code words proliferate

Learning through Geography. By Frances Slater. Heinemann Educational £5.95. 0 435 35715 8.

The four horsemen of the Apocalypse, Piaget, Burner, Gagne and Kohlberg are riding to the rescue of geography again. In their posse they include a few unknown newcomers like Cleva and Ausubel. Not far behind them is the old friend of geography in 1959 that it would appear in frequent extracts in a book on lesson planning in geography. The orientation of this book is educational and it examines ques-

tions in learning activities, planning such activities to reach generalizations and decisions, reaching these through processing and interpretation of data; interpreting and analysing attitudes and values; language, learning and evaluation. There are very full bibliographies but these reflect educational theorists rather than geographers.

There are many useful practical items such as an exercise on route planning, the Western Hemisphere, and a discussion of values and attitudes, often a neglected topic.

Code words proliferate: "teacher elaborated re-capitulation", "level of specificity", "alternative constructs", "discrepant perceptions",

"mediating public and private meanings". The philosophical analysis is often so complicated that it edges the geography out of the way. We are in great danger of creating an educational cspes and bays approach with Piaget, etc the landmarks on which geography is more likely to founder than be saved.

Though the author regards geography as a science she has virtually nothing in the mainstream of geography, little on how to do fieldwork, to combine classwork and fieldwork, nor does she really say how to conduct geography lessons, rather what to put in them. What about advice for teachers of mixed ability classes and the less-able? She writes as though there was only one kind of talented, cooperative child.

Towards the end she finally makes the most important point - what do you do with all your learning approaches when the pupils are swinging from the chandeliers? But she has no effective reply.

The book is full of information about the world over, it is strong on American and Antipodean influences and it will be useful in seminar discussions, from which it has arisen, but it does not solve the problems of the geography teacher at the battlefield.

Bryan Waites



A short break for the young artist: was it a mark of fortune that Nureyev's childhood ambitions to become a pianist were thwarted, or would the West have enjoyed his musicianship more than his dance? In Nureyev (Siddigick and Jackson £20.00) Clive Barnes offers a comprehensive account of the dancer's life from his non-conformist days in Russia through to his exceptional artistic career in the West, and goes some way towards answering the perennial question, "What is Nureyev really like?"

Patricia Johnstone

Flaubert's saint

The Temptation of St Antony. By Gustave Flaubert. Translated and introduced by Kitty McCreery. Penguin Classics £4.50. 0 14 484 410 6.

The Temptation remains one of Flaubert's most puzzling and difficult books. Neither fish nor flesh, it is part novel, part poem, part drama, occasionally acted, not much read. It leaves a gap in our understanding of Flaubert. Less likely to be read than Salammbô or *Madame Bovary*, it is more profound than *Bouvard et Pécuchet*. It links the warmth that Flaubert felt for the monk, the two unquestioned masterpieces, *Madame Bovary* and *L'Education Sentimentale*.

Kitty McCreery's translation is patchy, making heavy weather of a very rhetorical book. Her introduction, though, will become the standard guide to the text. She suggests that Flaubert's interest in the

hermit's story developed out of his own experience of mental disturbance (his epilepsy), his complex feelings about religion and his view that "vision" could take the imagination beyond mere language; Flaubert's Antony desired nothing more than to be unspiritual matter, just as Flaubert had long sought to reduce language to mere words, purged of old, tired associations.

As such the book comes to seem more innovative, better crafted and more consistent with Flaubert's other work than it had previously been held to be. Sartre, Baudelaire, Freud, Foucault, Swinburne, Flaubert himself (he called it his "life's work") all valued it highly and it broke ground for generations of later writers for whom an interest in extreme psychological states was matched by the same obsessive, self-destroying, self-loathing concern for language and form.

Martin Williams' important 1970 study *The Jazz Tradition* has been reprinted in a revised and updated form by Oxford University Press at £14.50 (Galaxy paperback, £4.95). One of the rare high points in jazz criticism since the war.

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BOOKS

Children's literature

Loaded dice

Audrey Laski on the latest paperbacks

The Antipodes seem to be the provenance or setting for more and more children's books today; I have three together here. The strongest of the three is Traveller (Anne de Roo, Puffin, £1.35), a solid, straightforward narrative of the pioneer days of Canterbury sheep farming, with a 16-year-old hero forced to grow up very fast under pressures of hardship and work, but only learning one of the most crucial lessons of maturity in the last few pages. Alongside it, Children of Fire Mountain (Graeme Farmer and Roger Simpson, Thames-Magnet, £1.25) seems thin, as the book of a television serial so often does, though the story of an English magate forced by the ancient gods of the Maori, communicating through his grand daughter's sensitivity, to abandon his plans to build an hotel on *Tapu* land, has plenty of scope for excitement; however, the modern values it expresses seem at odds with its period. The Hammerhead Light (Colin Thiele, Puffin, £1.10), set in South Australia, strikes me, perhaps unfairly, as a rather calculated tear jerker, with the death of a rescued sea bird and the banishment of formerly independent uncle Axel to an old folks' home being used as tools of Tessa's education in the miseries of life.

I get the same sense of dice being loaded from a prize winning novel for older readers, highly praised elsewhere. Moses Beesh (Ian Strachan, Puffin Plus, £1.50), whose eponymous old man prefers suicide to the attentions of the welfare state, reads to me like a party political broadcast for the Conservative Party, and I react against it with the same reflex as against what seems like propaganda for other parties; it has, in places, the fascination of all survival stories, but I distrust it. The fascination of the survival story is surely all that keeps The Children of the New Forest (Captain Marryat, Puffin Classics, £1.50), with its 303

pages of cloying Victorian prose, going; it seems a much less likely candidate for its own survival than others newly out under this imprint. Ryder Haggard's vigorous King Solomon's Mines (£1.10), Stevenson's superb Kidnapped and Louisa May Alcott's Little Women and Good Wives (95p each), whose tender, unforced sentiment makes the regular worked-up emotions of the end-less sequels to Ann of Green Gables (Ann of Windy Willows, Ann of Ingleside, L. M. Montgomery, Puffin £1.50 each) look factitious.

Clearly, there is a powerful market for this equivalent of soap opera, but it is to be hoped that its readers will also engage with cool, economical modern fictions like The Middle of the Sandwich (Puffin, £1.00), a tale about coping with bullying at school and coming to terms with the realisation that you may love your mother without much liking her which is both sober and funny enough to suggest that its author, Tim Kennemore, may be shaping up to be a British Betsy Byars. A less nicely balanced school of American writing is represented by My Brother the Thief (Marlene Santa Shyer, Granada Dragon, 95p), where Richard's petty larceny is over determined by his step father's perfectionism, his real father's irresponsibility and his friend's drug habit.

All these books are, of course, about pressures towards maturity; a fine historical novel can dramatise these in a special way. The Mark of the Horse Lord (Puffin, £1.75) is one of the darkest and most subtle

of Rosemary Sutcliffe's versions of the process; when Phaerdrus the freed gladiator takes on the role of Midir, the lost Gaelic chief, it can only be a matter of time before, if he assumes it fully and responsibly, it must mean his death. The transformation of Phaerdrus' careless darenedevilly to "Midir's" calculated self sacrifice for the sake of his adopted tribe is one of this remarkable author's most impressive achievements. T. R. Burch enters Sutcliffe territory with The Mercury Cup (Granada Dragon, £1.25) for rather younger readers; a spirited mystery story set at the time of Viking invasions of Britain, it makes up for what it lacks in depth by its ingenuity.

The future is another country, but a similarly undemanding but stimulating enjoyment can be got from the Dragonfall 5 (Dragonfall 5 and the Mastermind) ed Brian Earnshaw, illustrated by Simon Stern, Magnet £1.25; the stories about a battered old star ship run as a business venture by a family are inventive and funny, though it is a pity that the cadet members of the family are both boys; at least in Mr. Howser's *Maya* is a *Yager* (Kathleen Herson and Niki Dahl, Picturama, £1.95); a group of mainly black children sit on the steps in the sun and build a circus around them until the street is alive with exotic beasts. An equally delightful picture book with an important message about human diversity is *Oliver Button is a Cloud* (Tomie de Paola, Magnet, £1.25); this book maintains Oliver's right to be different, while Arto the Dandy

have to make do with much smaller scale activities; The Brownie Ventures (Dorothy Richardson, illustrated by Thelma Lambert, Knight 95p) are not allowed to extend their ventures to beyond helping some old people, though the twists of the little plot make that help more substantial than appears at first sight. Again, moving to even younger children's books, the boy Little Nose (John Grant, Knight, £1.25) can get up to mischief with his pet dinosaur, while My Naughty Little Sister at the Fair (Methuen, £1.25) takes Dorothy Edwards' tiny? to her furthest limits; however the re-issue of these stories and others in the same series with enchanting illustrations by Shirley Hughes, who has perfectly caught their spirit, is an excellent thing.

My Naughty Little Sister seems to live in a cosy English suburb or country town. An African childhood is further expressed in two new *Jafta* books (The Wedding and My Father, Hugh Lewin and Lisa Kopper, Dinosaur) while a multi ethnic inner city street is the scene of the magic transformation of imagination in *Maya* is a *Yager* (Kathleen Herson and Niki Dahl, Picturama, £1.95); a group of mainly black children sit on the steps in the sun and build a circus around them until the street is alive with exotic beasts. An equally delightful picture book with an important message about human diversity is *Oliver Button is a Cloud* (Tomie de Paola, Magnet, £1.25); this book maintains Oliver's right to be different, while Arto the Dandy

Lion (Morris Lurie and Brett Colquhoun, Youell Puffin, 80p), denies Arto a similar privilege, or gives a salutary lesson against vanity and silliness, according to your point of view. Henrietta is privileged to be a very special mouse in House by Mouse (George Mendoza and Doris Smith, Magnet, £1.25), a brilliant architect and interior designer; adults will enjoy the astonishing detail of her specialized home as much as children will. There are other marvellous interiors in Errol Le Cain's illustrations for Mrs Fox's Wedding (Stern and Stephen Corrin, Picture Puffins £1.25), which is nicely structured to encourage prediction. This is a re-telling of a traditional story; more re-tellings, this time of Aesop, are in The Exploding Frog (John McFarland and James Marshall, Hutchinson, £2.95); unfortunately, the bright presentation tends to reinforce rather than dispel the feeling that these tiny moral tales have been much over valued over time, and are neither very interesting nor very salutary; however, the illustration to "The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs" is a superb grown-up joke.

The Magnet Book of Spine Chillers (edited by Lance Salway, illustrated by Jill Bennett, £1.50) represents a really good idea; its ghost stories are neither adult classics nor the work of cheap thrill merchants, but stories by some of today's best writers for children; a distinguished collection. A spine chiller of another sort, ought not, I think, really to be here, since Raymond Briggs did not make it as a children's book, but his savage cartoon attack on *Protect and Survive*, When the Wind Blows (Penguin, £1.95) cannot simply be passed over in silence; if children are to look at it - and it is, like everything Briggs does, brilliantly worth looking at - it should be with an adult who can discuss the issues calmly and cope with the deep distress the last pages should cause.

Think about shiny things

Hand in Hand Assembly Book. By Russell Proffitt. Longman £3.50. 582 18460 6. Consequences. By Carol Griffin. Mayhew McCrimmon (Great Wakering, Essex). £1.25. 85397 319 6. Assembly Exchange. Edited by C. J. Redknapp. Serawood House (21 High Town Road, Maldenhead, Berkshire) £2.20. 907509 06 1. Infant Assemblies. By Sheila Davidson. Scripture Union £2.95. 86201 137 X. Saluts for All Seasons. By Victor J. Green. Blandford Press £3.95. 7137 1193 0.

The Great Assembly Debate continues to rival that atonic debate in *Paradise Lost*, at least in length. Next year marks its ruby anniversary. But while theorists discuss the merits and propriety of starting the school day with assembly or worship, the majority of teachers seem to favour their retention in some form or other, and a minority is lumbered with the task of finding something new every morning.

Books published to help that minority are wonderfully varied. Especially those intended for use in primary schools. The problem is that, while an idea may result in a caring interchange of thoughts in an

informal infant gathering, it looks silly on paper. How do you react to a suggestion for assembly that implies you are going to stand up and say "Now let's think about nice shiny things, like Linzi's conkers, and then we'll sing. The sun has got his hat on?"

One book which, apart from a short introduction which tends to use words like "euro-centric" deserves a rave reception is the *Hand in Hand Assembly Book*. It is a collection of stories from around the world, selected to reflect "the life and aspirations of every section of the community". The stories are both traditional and modern; there are animal fables from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean; tales of people such as Scott Joplin, Bob Marley and Gandhi. There are also fictional anecdotes about characters like Mustafa, a Turkish Cypriot who has to go to Muslim school at four o'clock and cannot play in the football team. There are no accounts of white people but, as the author points out, these are included in profusion in other assembly books.

The *Hand in Hand Assembly Book* will be invaluable in so-called multi-racial schools. It deserves as much use in areas where pupils will be surprised to learn that there are grannies in this country whose shopping lists include yams, okras, and saltfish.

Another book with its feet on the ground is *Consequences*, which offers 30 playlets suitable for assembly presentation. A recent informal survey of teachers involved in assembly planning indicated that half were in favour of dramatic interludes within assembly; only about five per cent thought that they might embark on such a venture. *Consequences* may encourage more to take the risk. Its playlets are suitable for primary and middle schools where the head would enjoy being the centre of a joke and where you might just get away with using a word like "bum".

Assembly Exchange is a product of Maldenhead Teachers' Centre. A number of junior and infant teachers offer ideas that they have found to work. The tone is naïve and nowhere more so than in a final section where the contributors say what they think assemblies "are all about". "An Assembly should encourage an awareness of God's world, its beauty and its ugliness... An Assembly can be an effective vehicle for remedying a lack of discipline", etc. Despite its muddled philosophy, it does present a wide range of practical suggestions, suited perhaps more for use with infants than with older juniors.

Also for use in infant schools is Sheila Davidson's *Infant Assemblies*. It is an honest book. The first page announces it is for those who want to teach "positive Christian truths", and for them it offers 178 outlines of assemblies together with prayers, songs and classroom activities. It does not provide stories or readings but sends you off in search of other publications. Even so, it is a useful catalogue of ideas for anyone embarking on Christian teaching with the five-year-old.

Less obviously useful is a nevertheless entertaining book by Victor J. Green, which tells the stories of 54 Christian saints. Some of these biographies are just a little nebulous. Of St Catherine he writes: "One has to admit that in all probability there never was such a person." Elsewhere we read, "It has to be admitted... we know little about Scholastica." St Lawrence appears to be famous for being popular: "His death, by burning on a gridiron, may have contributed to this popularity." As I say, it is entertaining. However I shudder to think what it might do in the hands of a vicar prone to visit church schools on saints days, even though the author describes *Saints for All Seasons* as "a handbook for teachers with students between the ages of nine and thirteen years". If it is really the case, why does he include so many saints whose feast days occur in school holidays?

David Self

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RESOURCES



Most of the major museums make some kind of special provision for children during the summer holidays, even if it's only at the most basic level of encouraging young visitors and supplying worksheets. Many go further. Here's a selection of events and activities over the holiday period. Most are free.

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham (021-235 2834) kicks off its summer programme on Monday and Tuesday July 25 and 26 (10.30-12.30) with "Welcome to the Wellcome", a morning of trails and drawing in the exhibition of antiquities from Sir Henry Wellcome's collection, with a chance to handle some archaeological material. Then on July 28 and 29 there's "A Birmingham ABC" with objects and a trail in the Local History Gallery. These are for all ages.

Five to 11-year-olds can make a "Local History Collage" and do quizzes in the Local History Gallery on August 2 and 3 (2.00-4.00), while 7 to 13-year-olds can visit an all-day session on "Discovering Dinosaurs" on August 8. "Touch and Draw - Rocks and Minerals" allows children of all ages to look closely at examples from the collections on August 9 (10.30-12.30; 2.00-4.00) and "Noah's Ark" in the National History Gallery provides them with collage, quizzes and puzzles on August 11 (10.30-12.30; 2.00-4.00).

The Bird Gallery is the setting for "The Birds of Beale" with further quizzes and activities for the 8 to 14-year-olds on August 15 (10.30-11.30). There's "Touch and Draw - Animals and Birds" for all ages on August 18 (10.30-12.30; 2.00-4.00), and on August 26 and 31 (10.30-12.30; 2.00-4.00) quizzes and activities for all ages relate to the David Cox exhibition at the Gallery from July 26 to October 14.

A number of sessions in the Activities Room are also free, but tickets have to be booked in advance. On July 28 and 29, from 2.00-3.00, there's "Fun for the Under-Fives" for children accompanied by adults. For 7 to 14-year-olds "Finding Fossils" provides the chance to look at the fossils in the Natural History Department on August 16 (10.30-12.30). The final session on September 5, "Chills, Feathers and Friends" and have help in making a collage on August 15 (10.30-11.30). There's "Touch and Draw - Animals and Birds" for all ages on August 18 (10.30-12.30; 2.00-4.00), and on August 26 and 31 (10.30-12.30; 2.00-4.00) quizzes and activities for all ages relate to the David Cox exhibition at the Gallery from July 26 to October 14.

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From scarecrows and sewing to seashells and sculptures

Liz Heron tracks down summer activities for the young in galleries and museums

Quechuas and Whistling Pots", lets the 7 to 14-year-olds look at Peru now and in ancient times through objects in the museum. They can even learn to make a simple Peruvian dish.

Birmingham Nature Centre, Pershore Road, Edgbaston (021-472 7775) is running a variety of free sessions. These include a collage and painting day for the under-fives on July 25 when they can make their own bird and butterfly mobiles, and another under-fives day on August 24, when they can make a flower collage and meet some of the animals at the centre. "This is the Nature Centre" on July 26 (10.30-12.00; 2.30-4.00) introduces 5 to 14-year-olds to the centre with a guided walk and some quizzes. "Who's About the Headlines" on July

27 (10.30-12.00; 2.30-4.00) is a guided walk and some quizzes. "Who's About the Headlines" on July

28 (10.30-12.00; 2.30-4.00) is a guided walk and some quizzes. "Who's About the Headlines" on July 29 (10.30-12.00; 2.30-4.00) is a guided walk and some quizzes. "Who's About the Headlines" on July 30 (10.30-12.00; 2.30-4.00) is a guided walk and some quizzes. "Who's About the Headlines" on July 31 (10.30-12.00; 2.30-4.00) is a guided walk and some quizzes.

On August 22 (10.30-3.00) "Investigating Insects" allows 9 to 14-year-olds to find and recognize insects from the ponds, streams, trees and other habitats at the Nature Centre; while on August 23 (2.30-4.00) parents and children of all ages can go off in search of "A Load of Rubbish", a demonstration and ramble to illustrate links between wildlife and rubbish. Starting from the Nature Centre on September 1 at 10.30 and 2.30 is "Ramble Down the River", a guided walk for over-10s and adults, along the River Rea, looking at its history and its wildlife. "The Birds of Cannon Hill" is a beginners' guide to bird-watching for the over-10s on September 2 (10.30-12.00) and "Introducing Insects" on September 5 (10.30-12.00) lets children aged five to nine look closely at a variety of insects.

Sessions with a historical theme at **Blakeney Hall**, Blakeney Road, York (021-783 2193) include "Elizabethan Food and Feasting" (August 23; 10.30-12.00), a talk for 8 to 15-year-olds followed by a chance to make a simple Elizabethan dish, and "At Home With the Smalbrocker", a drama-workshop with the aim of recreating life in a sixteenth-century house (August 25; 10.30-12.00) for children aged six to nine and 2.00-4.00 for 10 to 15-year-olds. On August 22 (10.30) "What's New at Blakeney Hall" introduces children to new discoveries and displays at the Hall.

A special series of free films on the natural sciences will be shown throughout the holidays at the National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff (0222-397 951). Activity sheets will also be available.



Feathered friends

work on the farm with scarecrow-making and old farming films. Village-shop activities take place on August 5. Children can discover how goods were weighed and made into packets, and shop with pre-decimal £ s d as well as seeing early films about shopping and making posters and calendars. The final session on August 6 explores toys and games, with toy-making, old playground and board games and football with a pig's bladder. The charge for activities is 5p a day (50p for adults) and under-sevens are welcome.

A range of activities, including morning courses in model-making and drawing exhibits, will run throughout the holidays at the Air and Space Museum, Liverpool Road, Manchester (061-833 9555), which covers the history of aviation.

"Paper As Image", an exhibition at the Southampton Art Gallery, City Centre, Southampton (0703 23855) from July 9-August 14, is the backdrop to a series of paper-making workshops; some for adults, some for children. Children's workshops run all day on July 28, August 2 and August 9. The charge is 50p.

"Sailing Ships" is the theme of three full-day workshops at the Wool House Maritime Museum, Bugle Street, Southampton (0703 23941). These take place on August 16, 17 and 18 from 10.00-3.00. The charge is 25p.

As well as having more variety to choose from, children in London have the advantage of more continuous programmes of events. Throughout the holiday period there's always something new somewhere.

The Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, Cambridge Heath Road, E2 (01-980 2415) has a regular programme three days a week. Every Tuesday from July 26-August 30 "Story Afternoon" offers stories for children of all ages and a chance to make a story comic strip after seeing the Victorian comics exhibition. Every Wednesday from July 27-August 31 a "Sewing Afternoon" allows children to make simple pieces based on the museum's collection. Thursdays from July 28-September 1 are for "Toys From Rubbish". Ideas for making toys from unlikely materials and a look at some made by children years ago. All of these take place between 10.00 and 5.00 and admission is free.

Events at the Getty Museum, Kingsland Road, E2 (01-739 8348) are connected to "On The Move", an exhibition that surveys the progress of transport and communications since the beginning of this century. Children can look at the development of the postal system, the telephone and the impact of jet-age travel. At work-shops on the history of writing children make paper, quill pens and seals. At a drama-based workshop they can use theme and puppets to devise a play on developments in travel. These run every Tuesday

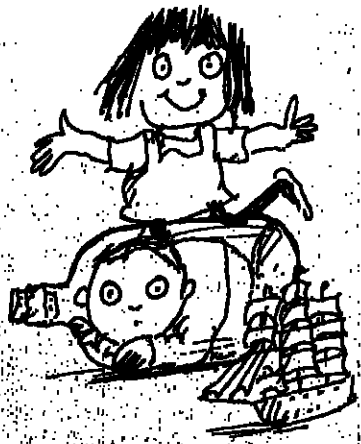
Saturday August 2-27 (10.00-12.30; 2.00-4.00). From July 26-30 puzzle sheets are available and there's a continuous series of talks for children.

The Horniman Museum Education Centre, London Road, Forest Hill, SE23 (01-699 1872) is open every day from July 23-September 3 (excluding Sundays and Bank Holidays) for 8 to 18-year-olds interested in working from the museum. Art and Craft Projects include puppets, mask making, collage, jewellery, toys, bags, boxes, mobiles and modelling. Materials are free and finished work can be taken home. Each session lasts for two hours: 10.30-12.30 and 1.30-3.30. Only the first 20 children to arrive will be accepted. Crayons and colouring sheets will be available at all times.

On Saturday August 13 there's a special day for children and adults on Yoruba culture. This is an African Arts in Education Project, with slides of both traditional and modern village life in Nigeria, and the opportunity to watch mask making, fabric printing, dyeing, collage and bead work. The project director will introduce some Nigerian instruments and there will be a music and dance workshop. Sessions are 10.30-12.30 or 1.30-3.30. The charge is £1.50 for each family group.

The Museum of London, London Wall, EC2 (01-600 3699) has a varied and extensive summer programme for children. Each week of the holiday has a different theme. From July 26-31 it's "Victorian London", with a workshop on toy theatres on July 26 (2.30), a practical demonstration of the processes of camera making by the London camera maker Mr Fred Gandolfi on July 28 at 11.15 (seats must be reserved in advance) plus a guided walk "In the Neighbourhood of Clerkenwell" at 2.30, and a workshop on Victorian family life in Limehouse on July 31 (3.00). "Roman London" is covered between August 2 and 5, with workshops on August 2 on "The Roman Soldier and his Armour" (12.00) and "Life in the Roman Army" (2.30). "Walking the Roman Wall" is on August 3 (2.15), while on August 4 there's a talk "Inside a Roman Kitchen" (12.00) and a practical demonstration of Roman cooking (2.30 - seats must be reserved). "Looking at Roman Coins" is the final workshop on August 5 (2.30).

"Twentieth Century London" starts with "Shopping at Marshall and Snelgrove" a workshop on August 9 at 12.00, followed at 2.30 by a talk, "London in the Thirties". On August 10 there's a workshop at 12.00, "Souvenirs from the past 80 years". "Story Afternoon" begins at 2.30. Workshops on August 11 are "The Jewish East End in the Early 20th Century" (12.30) and "One Man and His Toys - the King Collection" (2.30). The film *Voices for Women* is on August 14 (3.00). "Medieval and Tudor London" is continued on next page



Ships in bottles

RESOURCES

continued from previous page

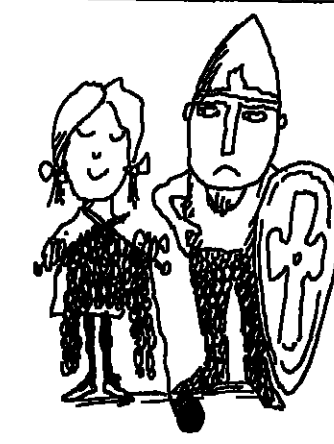
gins on August 16 with "Knit One, Purl One", a workshop on Tudor knitwear (12.00) and "The Medieval Winklepicker and Others", a workshop on leather shoes (2.30). On August 18 and 21 there are conservation workshops and films.

"Archaeology and the Prehistory of London" is the theme on August 23-25, with demonstrations, talks and films, concluding with "Found in London - Pottery and Other Finds from Recent Digs in the City".

The final week highlights "Georgian London". On August 30 there's "Finery for a Masquerade", a workshop at 12.00, and at 2.30 a talk, "A Child's Education". On August 31 the workshop is "A Georgian Household in Miniature" (12.00). All-day sessions on September 1 and 2 and all-afternoon on September 4 consist of "Mask Making for a Masquerade".

Coinciding with two of these period themes are performances by the dance group Danseway. On Sunday August 28 they recreate "The Roaring Twenties" with demonstrations of the tango, and on Sunday September 4 they put on a "Masquerade". Performances are at 3.00, 4.00 and 5.00. Admission to all events is free.

The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, WC2 (01-839 3321) has quizzes on the theme "See Shells" designed for children aged five to seven and 8 to 14, and available between July 23 and September 4. There are also talks related to paintings in the



Knit one, purl one

gallery, Monday-Friday at 11.30 throughout August. These are for 9 to 14-year-olds and last about an hour. Until August 7 a selection of work is on show from the "I See I Paint Music" competition organized for schoolchildren early this year.

"Date A Portrait" is the activity at the National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, Trafalgar Square, WC2 (01-930 1552) from July 25 to September 4. Five portraits are hung side by side, with no labels. By comparing them with other portraits in the gallery, children have to work out, to within 50 years, when, between 1500 and 1950, they were painted. A "hints" sheet is supplied. Children of

nine and over can take part, though entries will be judged in separate age groups. There's also a series of quiz sheets on "Kings and Queens", "Families", "Explorers and Discoverers" and "Miniatures".

A special film season runs from July 26-August 18 at the National Maritime Museum, Romney Road, SE10 (01-858 4422) and children can take part in a summer art competition on "Swans and Ducks on the Thames". On August 23, 24 and 25 children and adults can join in demonstrations of the Flammarion Fisherman's Dance. A series of planetarium talks in the South Building of the Old Royal Observatory gets under way on August 2 and runs Tuesdays to Fridays (2.30 and 3.30) until August 26. Admission 15p for 9 to 15-year-olds.

You can touch a python skin, take your fingerprints or look through a microscope to study a butterfly's wing in the Family Centre at the Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, SW7 (01-589 6323) which is open from August 1-26. There are topics to investigate and specimens of bones, fossils and stuffed birds to handle. Activity sheets are also available.

"Anne Damer, Sculptress" is the theme of the summer course for children at Rangem House, Chesterfield Walk, SE10. The project is based on the portrait bust of Queen Caroline by Anne Damer (1748-1828), a sculptress of the neo-classical period who specialized in portrait busts. Her sisters included Nelson and Napoleon



Masks

but she also produced popular groups of animals. Week 1 (August 1-5) is for children aged 7 to 10. Morning sessions Monday to Wednesday consist of talks and worksheets both on Anne Damer's background and work, and on practical methods of sculpting with clay. Afternoon sessions include clay modelling in the studio. Thursday is taken up with a full-day visit to the National Maritime Museum to learn about Nelson, and on Friday afternoon children will present the work they have done in the course of the week. Week 2 (August 8-12) is for children aged 11-15, with the same programme except for the day outing. This group will visit the British

Museum to look at Greek and Roman and neo-classical works. Week 3 (August 15-19), for both age groups, is devoted to drama and historical dance, with the aim of acting a small play at the end of the week and possibly producing a "Masked Ball" which parents will be invited to attend. Advance enrolment is advised. Contact G. P. Adams, ILEA Museum Adviser, 275 Kennington Lane, SE11 (01-633 2751).

The "Discovery Room" is open from August 1-31 at the Science Museum Exhibition Road, SW7 (01-589 3456). A selection of exhibits can be touched and investigated, among them a kaleidoscope, a miniature robot, super-magnetic illusions and a variety of puzzles. The summer quiz "All Done By Mirrors" relates to exhibits such as periscopes and telescopes. Weekly prizes are to be won. Children's films on science and technology run through July and August.

Holiday tours for children aged 7 to 14 are on offer at the Tate Gallery, Millbank, SW1 (01-821 1313). These start in the Rotunda at 11.00 on Tuesdays, August 2, 9, 16 and 23, and on Thursdays, August 4, 11, 18 and 25. Each day has a different theme to explore in looking at paintings and sculpture. The first two weeks will focus on sculpture, to coincide with "Making Sculpture", the working studio on the lawn where sculptors can be observed at work, and visitors young and old have the opportunity to model a head in clay.

MEDIA

Save the wood

by Jackie Hardie

Fate of the Forests
Shell Film Unit
Shell Film Library,
25 The Burroughs,
Hendon, London NW4 4AT.

It is a commonly held view that the destruction of tropical forests is caused by the activities of the international timber trade - but in fact this accounts for only one fifth of the total amount of forest cleared in any one year. The other 80 per cent is being destroyed in the struggle for human survival, and this is expounded in the latest film from the Shell Film Unit.

In *Fate of the Forests* they show how, for the poor of the Third World, the energy crisis is about wood not oil and there are sequences showing the effects of deforestation in many places.

Nepal, Kenya, Malaysia and Brazil are four countries that are shown to be facing up to the problems and attempting remedial measures. For instance, the twin demands on the forest of conservation and development are attacked by a radical plan in Malaysia, where they hope to retain half of the remaining rain forest and clear the rest for planting oil and rubber trees.

The film demonstrates the extent of the problem but is forceful in its conclusion: there must be a response from the whole world community so that the level of existence among the poor of the Third World can be raised for the benefit of all and the survival of the forest.

A 23-minute film on the subject of vivisection has been produced by British Films for the National Anti-Vivisection Society. The film's purpose, says the Society, is "to show the full horror, range and scale of experiments on animals as well as the humane and more sophisticated alternative methods which are now being developed". The film is now being developed.

Suffer the Animals can be hired from: Sponsor: Bookings Department, The Guild Organisation, Guild House, Guild Road, Peterborough, PE2 9PZ.



When Elizabeth dedicated a piece to her mother, Lady Emily failed to listen ... Elizabeth Lutyens



"You think to yourself well, there's something wrong with me because you mustn't hate your mother ..." Maureen Lipman



"My mother ... was at the stage where women did their role as they had received it from their parents" Sheila Hancock

Mothers by daughters

Betka Zamoyska reviews a series on mother/daughter relationships

Mothers By Daughters
Channel 4
Fridays, 22.30

Now that marriage has become a fashionable occupation, other aspects of family life are also being rediscovered. In Brit Allcroft's new series, starting this Friday, July 15, on Channel 4, Bel Mooney talks to six successful women about their relationships with their mothers.

In spite of differences in character, background and upbringing, Barbara Windsor, Bernadette Deylin, McAlister, Sheila Hancock, Maureen Lipman, Lynn Seymour and Elizabeth Lutyens disclose remarkably similar characteristics in their mother/daughter relationships: suppressed tensions and rivalry; inability to fulfil their mothers' expectations; feelings of anger, guilt and retribution often set against equally strong bonds of loyalty and love. As Maureen Lipman says, "You think to yourself well, there's something wrong with me because you mustn't hate your mother. But love them, when you're young, you're going to despise them, you're going to despise them, you're going to despise them. All those things are going to be true, one doesn't negate the other."

A daughter's real appreciation of her mother often comes too late and this is one reason why Brit Allcroft

wanted to "honour the mother and daughter relationship" in this series. The first speaker, Barbara Windsor, describes her sense of regret after her mother's death ("I wish I'd been nicer") and this feeling keeps recurring throughout the interviews. The most devoted and dutiful mothers were not necessarily the most loved. Elizabeth Lutyens adored her mother, Lady Emily, who left home to follow the guru Krishna Murti and took virtually no interest in her musical daughter's career. When Elizabeth dedicated a piece of music to her mother, Lady Emily failed to listen because it was broadcast during her supper time.

Bel Mooney has a gift for putting her speakers at their ease and she gets some remarkably frank answers to her most personal questions. It is fascinating to watch how these women unearth long buried feelings and discover unknown areas in themselves but these 45 minute interviews only touch upon the broader aspects of the mother/daughter relationship. Sheila Hancock gives one of the most interesting comparisons of the mother's changing role as she has witnessed it in the lives of her

mother, herself and her daughters: "There are two things that have had a vast difference on women's lives, the pill and women's liberation, the female enunch and all that. And my mother and I and my daughters are at different stages of that development. My mother utterly unaware of any of that - that's why some of your questions are so difficult to answer because my mother never asked herself those questions. She was at the stage where women did their role as they had received it from their parents and that was that. Then I did - because of them wanting me to succeed and things went a little further, but my life changed enormously after I read *The Female Eunuch* and I began to ask questions and feel I had the right to be behaving the way I was - in other words having a career that I felt quite passionately about. Now Ellie Jane is a stage further and she is into a whole life that I am having to become used to."

It is a pity she did not develop this theme further and that this interesting group of women did not, at times, consider the mother's role from a more objective standpoint. This series provides some remarkable insights into the close bonds between women in a family but perhaps it could have been set in a wider context without losing the personal revelations that make for compulsive viewing.

A play based on the letters post Sylvia Plath wrote to her mother between 1949 and her death in 1963

BRIEFINGS

radio & tv

Open University

Pay for Play School (Saturday, 07.15 BBC1)

Does personal gain motivate everyone? A look at a school based almost entirely on reward.

The Plough and the Hoe (Monday, 12.40, Thursday, 06.55 BBC2)

This series builds up a picture of the impact of agricultural development on village life in Northern India.

Egyptian: A Self-Portrait (Monday, 07.45 BBC2)

An examination of the different ways in which land is used on Egypt brings to light the interests of a varied number of land users, from the farmer to the gamekeeper and the conservationist.

General interest

Soundings (Saturday, 23.00 Radio 4)

A new religious current affairs series taking a specific point for discussion each week. Rev. Ted Harrison, a minister who is preparing himself for a life after a nuclear war.

Get by in Greek (Sunday, 16.30 VHF 4)

Just in time for the holidays, a repeat of this survival course in modern Greek.

Numbers at Work (Monday, 18.00 C4)

Fred Harris looks at charts, graphs and diagrams and explains how they can be used to convey complicated mathematical information in an interesting way.

A Valued Revolution (Tuesday, 18.00 C4)

Why have some Egyptian women rejected Western dress and returned to the veil? This programme is the first of three, produced by women, examining the status of Arab women today.

Start Here (Wednesday, 17.30 C4)

A second series of science programmes for 10 to 14 year olds begins with instructions on how to make an indoor rocket range, how to "crush a tin without touching it" and how to stay dry under water.

Letter Home (Wednesday, 21.00 C4)

A play based on the letters post Sylvia Plath wrote to her mother between 1949 and her death in 1963

SECONDARY MUSIC

continued

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11-18 years. Approx.

1000 on roll. Approx. 140

in 6th form.

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1983

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Headmaster, Walton

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Tel: 01947 541111.

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Royal County of BERKSHIRE

AREA CAREERS OFFICER

Applications are invited from qualified and experienced careers officers for the post of area careers officer for Bracknell following the promotion of the present officer. The Area Officer is part of the management team of the county service and will be responsible for the development of work in an expanding area. Computerised systems have been introduced in the county. Assistance towards removal costs etc may be available.

Further details and application forms (enclosing SAE) from Director of Education (C), Shire Hall, Sharnfield Park, Reading RG2 6XE. Closing date 5th August 1983.

Berkshire County Council is an equal opportunity employer and all applicants will be considered solely on the basis of suitability for the post irrespective of race, colour, sex, marital status or disability.

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(SCHOOLS)

£10,527 - £17,000 p.a.

This post (vacant on retirement and available from 1st January 1984) is open to qualified teachers with good teaching experience. Applicants should be graduates with 12A administrative experience. The post will carry responsibility for all aspects of Special Education and the 1981 Education Act and for certain other matters concerned with primary and secondary education. The salary scale is related to J.M.C. Chief Officers' scales. Assistance with removal expenses in approved cases. Essential car user allowance.

For further particulars please telephone 0533 871313 Ext. 7177. Apply (no form) giving full details, curriculum vitae, names and addresses of two referees and enclosing a.s.s. to the Director of Education, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester LE5 8RF by 8th August.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
Applications are welcome from suitably qualified and experienced people regardless of race, ethnic origin, religion, sex, marital status or disability.

SHEFFIELD EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

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Further details and application forms (enclosing SAE) from Director of Education (C), Shire Hall, Sharnfield Park, Reading RG2 6XE. Closing date 5th August 1983.

ADMIN LEA cont.



Buckinghamshire
Education Department

Principal Administrative Officer (Schools)

Scale: PO3 (£11,364-£12,738 pa)

Applications are invited from persons with suitable qualifications, preferably with administrative experience within the Education Service, for this post in the Education Department at County Hall, Aylesbury. The Schools Section comprises 35 staff and the officer appointed will be responsible to the Senior Education Officer (Schools) for the overall administration of the Section. There will be particular responsibilities connected with meetings of the Schools Sub-Committee and its Panels and administrative support to the professional staff.

100% removal expenses, lodging allowance and assistance with legal expenses payable in approved cases. Further details and application forms from Chief Education Officer (O), County Hall, Aylesbury HP20 1UZ, on receipt of a.s.s. Completed applications to be returned within 14 days of the appearance of this advertisement.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN ENGLAND AND WALES



Test Development Unit Research Officer

Applications are invited for the post of Research Officer in the Test Development Unit. The person appointed will be responsible for the development of new assessment materials principally in the area of mathematics, although other attainment and ability tests may also be involved. The responsibilities of the postholder will include item writing, test construction and standardisation. Qualifications should include a first degree in either Mathematics, Psychology or related Social Science and a knowledge of psychometrics. Good numerical skills are essential and recent teaching experience would be an advantage.

The appointment will be for three years in the first instance from 1st September, 1983, or as soon as possible thereafter. Interviews will be held on Wednesday 10th August, 1983.

For application form and further particulars, please apply to Mrs P. P. Harris, Personnel Officer (quoting Post No. TD002), National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales, The Mere, Upton Park, Slough, Berkshire SL1 2DQ. Tel: Slough 74123. Closing date for return of completed Application Forms, no later than Thursday 4th August, 1983.

Assistant County Education Officer (Finance)

£17,193-£18,729

This is a new Senior Management post which carries responsibility for financial advice and management throughout the Education Department.

Applicants should have appropriate accounting qualifications and experience together with a commitment to the aims of the education service. The appointment will be with effect from 1st January 1984.

Application form and further details from Head of Manpower Services (Ref: MSD/107), County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2DN. Tel: 01-546 1050, Extn. 3577. Closing date: 19th August, 1983.



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT CAREERS SERVICE

CAREERS OFFICER (Unemployment Specialist) A.P. 3/4 £6264 - £7896

Applications are invited for the post of Careers Officer in the Authority's Careers Service. Applicants should preferably be qualified Careers Officers but persons with relevant qualifications and experience may be considered for this appointment.

The Officer appointed will deal exclusively with the needs of unemployed young people and the duties will involve considerable contact with employers and sponsors of schemes and projects under the Youth Training Scheme.

Application forms and further particulars may be obtained from the Personnel Officer, Town Hall, St. Helens, to whom completed applications should be returned by Friday 8th August, 1983.



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT General Educational Adviser: SPECIAL NEEDS -

Soulbury Scale equivalent to Burnham HT Group 8/5 (£14,992-£17,220)

There is an important and challenging post in the Education Advisory Service. In addition to having a pastoral responsibility for at least two groups of Primary and/or Secondary schools, the person appointed will have particular responsibilities relating to the Local Education Authority's policy on SPECIAL NEEDS in schools and other education establishments.

In addition to possessing a relevant teaching qualification and having a number of years teaching experience, successful applicants should be able to demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of their specialist field. Experience of working in a multicultural area would be an advantage. Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Chief Executive, Town Hall, East Ham E6 2RP (tel: 01-471 0619 - 24 hour answering service, quoting reference ASC/GEA 1). CLOSING DATE: 5TH AUGUST.

LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM



PRINCIPAL CAREERS OFFICER £11,364 - £12,738

Applicants should possess varied professional experience, have exercised administrative and managerial responsibilities at a senior level in a Local Authority Careers Service and be able to offer dynamic leadership to a professional team in a recently restructured Careers Service.

Re-location expenses in accordance with the Authority's Scheme will be payable in appropriate cases.

Application forms and further details from the Director of Education, Municipal Buildings, Cleveland Street, Birkenhead, Merseyside (051-647-7000 ext 385) returnable by 8 August.

Superintendent Education Welfare Officer

£9,060-£9,660

For this post, based in Exeter, we are seeking a suitably qualified person to lead a team of seven Education Welfare Officers in the East Devon area. You will also be required to give support and advice on training and associated matters for the Education Welfare Service in the Authority as a whole.

Application form and further details (a.s.s. please) from Chief Education Officer, County Hall, Topham Road, Exeter EX2 4QG, returnable by 8th August, 1983.



WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Education Department Careers Service

Appointments within a lively and innovative service in an attractive part of the County.

CAREERS OFFICERS

(2 Posts) North East Wiltshire - Swindon
Salary Scale 4/5/6 £8,264-£8,712 pa

i) A permanent full-time post - reference E83/294
ii) A temporary full-time post whilst a member of staff is on maternity leave - reference E83/295

To undertake duties of vocational and educational guidance, counselling and assessment with pupils, students and other clients using the careers service. Candidates should possess the Diploma in Careers Guidance or its equivalent.

TRAINEE CAREERS OFFICER

Reference E83/298
Trainee Grade - £2,703-£2,493 pa (Minimum at age 21 of £4,200 pa)

A background or interest in vocational guidance and the counselling needs of young people is required. The successful applicant will be required to undertake a one year full-time course of study for the Diploma in Careers Guidance, offered by the Local Government Training Board. Entry to training will normally require graduate qualifications or their equivalent. Application form, full details and job descriptions for all posts available from the Chief Education Officer (a.o. J. M. Leigh - Staffing Group), County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JB. Tel: Trowbridge 3641, Ext. 2454. Please quote appropriate reference number. Closing date 3rd August, 1983.

Suffolk County Council Education Department

ASSISTANT EDUCATION OFFICER (PERSONNEL)

Post E.102
£13,395-£15,033 per annum

Applications are invited for the above key post in the Support Services Division of the Education Department. The post holder will act as the department's personnel specialist across the whole spectrum of personnel work including industrial relations matters, particularly with the formulation and implementation of personnel policies affecting non-teaching staff in 450 educational establishments throughout Suffolk. In addition, the postholder will be responsible for a number of administrative matters including the co-ordination and drawing up of reports to the General Purposes Sub-Committee.

Applicants must have had at least five years experience of local authority personnel work at a senior level and hold a relevant final qualification. Application forms and further details may be obtained from the County Education Officer, County Hall, Grimwade Street, Ipswich IP4 1LJ. Closing date: 12th August, 1983.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL CAREERS OFFICER £10,542-£11,136

We want a qualified careers officer with some management experience to supervise the work of two small careers service teams concerned with Information Services and Higher & Further Education. Each of the teams is led by a Senior Careers Officer.

The Careers Service in Bexley is centralised in modern offices in Bexley Heath and the Council has recently expanded the Service to include 16 careers officers. This post is one of two Assistant Principal Careers Officers who, with Principal Careers Officer, make up the management team co-ordinating the Service. The postholder, who also oversees the administration of the Centre, will retain a small oversight and administration of the in-service training of other careers staff. Certain information systems have been computerised so the successful candidate will be expected to have an interest in computerisation, though no previous experience is required.

For an informal discussion please telephone Miss J. Marmont MBE, Principal Careers Officer, on extension 2233.

Application form and further information from the Educational Service Secretary, Town Hall, Crawley, Kent DA1 4EN. (Tel: 01-303 7777, Ext. 542643). Closing date 8th August, 1983.



Senior Education Officer

Reporting to the Deputy Secretary-General and working closely with all the departments of the Arts Council, the Senior Education Officer is responsible for the implementation and development of the Council's Education policy.

This work takes a number of different forms and includes varied contact and involvement with many organisations and individuals in both the arts and educational fields.

The successful applicant will probably be someone either working in the arts who has experience of educational involvement or an educator who has extensive knowledge of the professional arts. Commitment, calmness under pressure and an ability to communicate with people at all levels are essential requirements. Salary on a scale from £11,329 to £13,768 per annum.

For an application form and job description, contact the Personnel Department, Arts Council of Great Britain, 105 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AT. Tel: (01) 928 8496 ext 265. Closing date for receipt of applications is 12 August 1983.

- An Equal Opportunity Employer -



Careers Officers

(2 Posts)
£7,191-£7,896

Required in the Plymouth area. For one post we are seeking a qualified Careers Officer whose duties will cover the full range of work in schools, colleges, with employers, YTS and the unemployed. For the second post we need a qualified and experienced careers officer. This post is funded by the Department of Employment. You will advise and assist unemployed young people and those on YTS and CP schemes including helping people onto YTS and helping those leaving. Negotiation and liaison with MSC, managing agents and others in connection with YTS will be an important feature of the work. Current driving licence essential for both posts.

Application forms and further details (a.s.s. please) from Chief Education Officer, County Hall, Topham Road, Exeter, returnable by 8th August, 1983.



Administration General

GLOUCESTER

THE WILDFLOW TRUST
SENIOR EDUCATION
OFFICER

Mr. Martin, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, is seeking a Senior Education Officer to run the Education Information Centre at its centre at Marton Mere near Crickley, in Gloucestershire. The post is a full-time post and involves a wide range of duties including the supervision of a team of education officers and the management of a large budget. The postholder will be responsible for the development and implementation of the Centre's policies and for the co-ordination of its activities. The postholder will also be responsible for the management of the Centre's finances and for the recruitment and training of staff. The postholder will be required to have a minimum of five years experience of local authority education work at a senior level and to hold a relevant final qualification. The salary scale for this post is £11,364-£12,738 per annum. Applications should be sent to Mrs P. P. Harris, Personnel Officer, County Hall, Gloucester, GL1 2EJ. Closing date: 12th August, 1983.

Child Care

SUFFOLK

BRAMFIELD HOUSE
SCHOOL

Private Residential, Bramfield House, Bramfield, Suffolk. Age range 10 to 16 years.

HOUSEPARENT
The Bramfield House School is seeking a Houseparent for its boarding school. The postholder will be responsible for the supervision and care of a group of boarding pupils. The postholder will also be responsible for the management of the boarding house and for the recruitment and training of staff. The postholder will be required to have a minimum of five years experience of local authority education work at a senior level and to hold a relevant final qualification. The salary scale for this post is £11,364-£12,738 per annum. Applications should be sent to Mrs P. P. Harris, Personnel Officer, County Hall, Gloucester, GL1 2EJ. Closing date: 12th August, 1983.

Applications by fully informed letter and curriculum vitae plus details of references to the Headmaster, Bramfield House School, Bramfield, Suffolk. Closing date: 12th August, 1983.

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CRAWLEY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTRE require a

MANAGER

to Supervise training staff and create a viable Training Centre in Computer and Communication Technology

QUALIFICATIONS
Industrial experience in this field
Teaching experience an advantage.
Preferred age 28-30 years
with a Degree in relevant discipline.

SALARY
Circa £12K - Limited housing assistance may be available.

Applications in writing including CV to:



CRAWLEY TRAINING
ASSOCIATION
Maxwell Way, Crawley
West Sussex RH10 2SF
Tel: Crawley 34891 37353/4

MICROELECTRONICS EDUCATION PROGRAMME MANAGER (Software)

Applications are invited for the post of Manager (Software) under the DES Microelectronics Education Programme.

The Software Manager will be responsible to the Deputy Director (Curriculum Development) for the management of a small self-contained unit to support the regional and national work of MEP in software development.

The Programme has recently been extended until March 1985, and because of increased responsibilities has been decided to create this new unit. Likely locations could be in Cambridge or Newcastle upon Tyne.

A requirement of the post will be to visit projects throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A high standard of practice in both computing and education is essential and ideally the applicant will have experience in software production or publishing.

Employment will be for a fixed term ending on 31st March, 1985. Secondment from an existing post will be considered. Salary in the range £12,000 to £16,000.

Applications by letter (no form) to:
The Office Manager
Council for Educational Technology
3 Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BA.
Closing date 29th July, 1983.

sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

An Equal Opportunity Employer

SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

MANAGER

INTERMEDIATE TREATMENT CENTRE

(Ref: 438)
Grade SO2 £9,945 to £10,539

3 GROUP WORKERS

(Ref: 439)
Grade SO1 £9,060 to £9,660

The Department is committed to the continuing development of Intermediate Treatment as an important aspect of its child care strategy.

A new Intermediate Treatment Centre will open shortly in the Northern Division of the Borough. (A Manager and two Groupworkers are required).

Applications are invited from qualified social workers, teachers or youth workers with significant skills in groupwork and delinquency management. An interest in and aptitude for remedial education and/or computer education would be useful for one of these posts.

For informal discussion ring Philip Gibson, Intermediate Treatment Officer on 021-658 2169.

A groupworker is also required at the existing Centre in Snettisham. For informal discussion telephone Hugh Robertson, Manager on 021-658 2843.

Closing date 12th August, 1983.

Requests (quoting appropriate reference number and enclosing a.s.s.) for application forms should be made to the Personnel Officer, Town Hall, West Bromwich B70 8DX. A Union Membership Agreement is in operation. Canvasing of members of the authority will be equally.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

BARKING & DAGENHAM

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Salary: in the range of £10,000 to £13,750 (including London addition)

Two fully qualified educational psychologists are required to join the service as soon as possible. Applicants should possess a degree in psychology or the equivalent, teaching experience and postgraduate professional training.

The Schools' Psychological Service is housed in an excellent purpose built centre from educational psychologists and educational psychologists have an estimated population of 100,000 young people in the 0-19 age range. The service is well equipped and supported by good secretarial staff.

There will be considerable opportunity for the successful applicants to develop their interest in a progressive service.

Closing date: 21 August 1983.

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact Mr. G. P. Rickard, Principal Educational Psychologist, Barking and Dagenham Education Department, 25 Elmwood Road, Barking, Essex, S.S.11 1JG. Tel: 01-675 4000. Further particulars and application forms may be obtained. (00782) 580000

Examiners

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS EXAMINATIONS BOARD

Applications are invited for the post of Chief Examiner in the following examinations:

SINGAPORE SUBJECT EXAMINATIONS

Arithmetic (Nursing module) Stage I

Commerce (Finance) Stage III

Application forms and further information can be obtained from Mr. J. H. G. Smith, Assistant Secretary, Examinations Board, John Adam House, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152, 154, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 166, 168, 170, 172, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 184, 186, 188, 190, 192, 194, 196, 198, 200, 202, 204, 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 216, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226, 228, 230, 232, 234, 236, 238, 240, 242, 244, 246, 248, 250, 252, 254, 256, 258, 260, 262, 264, 266, 268, 270, 272, 274, 276, 278, 280, 282, 284, 286, 288, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298, 300, 302, 304, 306, 308, 310, 312, 314, 316, 318, 320, 322, 324, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 336, 338, 340, 342, 344, 346, 348, 350, 352, 354, 356, 358, 360, 362, 364, 366, 368, 370, 372, 374, 376, 378, 380, 382, 384, 386, 388, 390, 392, 394, 396, 398, 400, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410, 412, 414, 416, 418, 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432, 434, 436, 438, 440, 442, 444, 446, 448, 450, 452, 454, 456, 458, 460, 462, 464, 466, 468, 470, 472, 474, 476, 478, 480, 482, 484, 486, 488, 490, 492, 494, 496, 498, 500, 502, 504, 506, 508, 510, 512, 514, 516, 518, 520, 522, 524, 526, 528, 530, 532, 534, 536, 538, 540, 542, 544, 546, 548, 550, 552, 554, 556, 558, 560, 562, 564, 566, 568, 570, 572, 574, 576, 578, 580, 582, 584, 586, 588, 590, 592, 594, 596, 598, 600, 602, 604, 606, 608, 610, 612, 614, 616, 618, 620, 622, 624, 626, 628, 630, 632, 634, 636, 638, 640, 642, 644, 646, 648, 650, 652, 654, 656, 658, 660, 662, 664, 666, 668, 670, 672, 674, 676, 678, 680, 682, 684, 686, 688, 690, 692, 694, 696, 698, 700, 702, 704, 706, 708, 710, 712, 714, 716, 718, 720, 722, 724, 726, 728, 730, 732, 734, 736, 738, 740, 742, 744, 746, 748, 750, 752, 754, 756, 758, 760, 762, 764, 766, 768, 770, 772, 774, 776, 778, 780, 782, 784, 786, 788, 790, 792, 794, 796, 798, 800, 802, 804, 806, 808, 810, 812, 814, 816, 818, 820, 822, 824, 826, 828, 830, 832, 834, 836, 838, 840, 842, 844, 846, 848, 850, 852, 854, 856, 858, 860, 862, 864, 866, 868, 870, 872, 874, 876, 878, 880, 882, 884, 886, 888, 890, 892, 894, 896, 898, 900, 902, 904, 906, 908, 910, 912, 914, 916, 918, 920, 922, 924, 926, 928, 930, 932, 934, 936, 938, 940, 942, 944, 946, 948, 950, 952, 954, 956, 958, 960, 962, 964, 966, 968, 970, 972, 974, 976, 978, 980, 982, 984, 986, 988, 990, 992, 994, 996, 998, 1000.

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PERSONAL

The school year has definitely ended; so has the university year. A lot of people have left their schools or their universities for the last time. The actual moment of leaving has probably been unemotional: the end of the school year tends to be a chaos of examinations, of not knowing quite whether you have to be at school or not, of returning long overdue library books, of feeling that no one cares much now whether you live or die.

Leaving university is much the same. After the last examination paper is written, apart from the exhaustion and anxiety, there is the appalling problem of clearing your room, arranging the transport of your accumulated possessions, paying your bills, doing your washing and getting back your record player from the person you lent it to when you thought you were in love with him. It is all too fraught for more than a passing reflection that you are moving on from one stage to another. Let's tidy this up, and get it over.

But all the same, school and university are prime causes of emotional

nostalgia, or at least they used to be. "Forty years on, When afar and asunder": that has been a powerful image. People still come back in considerable numbers to Oxford Gaudies, telling in maudlin tones that this was the very room in which they gave their first party, or through whose window they vomited all those years ago. The recent Rhodes Scholars' reunion showed the deep pleasure people have in such things. Meeting, if not old friends, then at least old look-alikes, they were enchanted.

Nothing is so liable as this kind of reunion to be called sentimental. I have been puzzled for a long time about the exact nature of sentimentality. At school, being deeply in love with the Latin mistress, I was aware even then that I was open to this charge. But I did not know precisely what it amounted to nor how to defend myself against it. I just had to make a sharp distinction between home emotions and school emotions.

Sentimentality is generally held to be a kind of falseness, a species of deception. I did not feel false. It is



Mary Warnock

sometimes defined as indulgence in an emotion disproportionate to its object. But the object of my emotion seemed nearly divine, for whom no worship could have been excessive. It is perhaps the indulgence in an emotion without practical commitments, experienced, as Oscar Wilde put it, by someone not prepared to pay the price. But I would have been prepared to make any sacrifice, only none was called for. In any case why should every emotion have its price? If I like to sit at home, sobbing and crying over the *Winterreise*, or indeed a story in *Woman's Journal*, what wrong do I do?

But perhaps it is because sentimental feelings are intrinsically impractical that we feel called upon to condemn them. They are false not because they deceive anyone, but because, if action were required, the feeling would melt away. Absence makes the heart grow fonder, and absence can be not only geographical but temporal. What is in the distant past, or indeed the distant future, carries no present responsibilities. Nothing has to be done about it. If, thinking sentimentally of my old college, I summon my solicitor and rewrite my will in its favour, perhaps my feeling ceases to be properly called sentimental.

It remains to be seen whether the present lot of leavers are less sentimental than their predecessors. I suspect they may be. College Gaudies may be less well-attended in future. This is partly because there will be more women, not temperamentally given to such get-togethers. Involved in the proceedings as years go on. But, more fundamentally, people now do not much trust emotions, unless they are directed to the immediate present.

The growth of the nostalgia industry does not really contradict this, for the past thus invoked is a present fashion rather than a true past.

Whatever may be true, in any case, of the pleasures of recollection, it is certain that people get less pleasure than they did from things absent because yet to come. I could, as an undergraduate, buy a bun and carry it back from the shop, looking forward all the way to eating it. Now undergraduates have hardly left the shop before they eat the bun, however inappropriate the circumstances.

Anticipation is the flip-side of nostalgia, and people don't go in for it as they used to. Perhaps the present generation of undergraduates mistrust all long-lasting emotions, on the ground that these may turn into sentimentality, or may continue to be cultivated for their own sake, where the proper object has gone.

I can understand this fear, but it suggests a bleak world. I'd rather have the old school song, and the old girls' reunion, even at the price of a certain absurdity. They are, after all, the most harmless of all pleasures.

FESTIVAL DIARY

"I don't know who they are, but they are all painted green and very Welsh!" squawked the Director's personal radio as he sat talking to me in the foyer of the Royal Festival Hall on Saturday before the start of the third and final day of the National Festival of Music for Youth. The mysterious green Celts, it transpired had de-bounced with *hwy!* into a place where someone was trying to put together enough silence to tune a harpsichord. They should hire the chap who tunes our school pianos. He has been known to do this during a wet lunch-time, with all the kids in school - a feat of the ear equivalent to identifying species of gnats by their footstep.

Mind you, young people invading space is what this festival is all about. It has made year by year an ever strengthening assertion of the right of access by youth to a part of the cultural universe which once upon a dim time was the exclusive preserve of adults, and to which children were only admitted on the basis of a somewhat Mickey Mouse-style contract.

The youngest person at the festival must have been Alexander Hankinson, aged just three weeks. Although he was not actually performing - in the conventional sense - his mother certainly was, as conductor of the choir of Lytham St Anne's High School. In addition to the various choral trophies which she has gathered up, Barbi Hankinson really ought to get a cup from the DBS for the shortest maternity leave on record. I never quite worked out how long she was away, but so far as I could tell she only missed two weeks of choir practice. When I saw young Alexander he looked fit and hearty, and was being well looked after by the young ladies of Barbi's choir.

The three members of the Hunka Trio are a bit older than Alexander, but not much. Katherine Hunka (violin) and Alexandra Mackenzie (cello) are both ten, and Nicole Loud (violin) is eight. They opened the Chamber Music Class on Saturday, looking unbelievably assured, and making very mature sounds. There can be few young musicians who have not, at some time, been asked to play a piece of music by a famous composer.

feet dangling two inches above the platform. The Hunka Trio won an Outstanding Performance Award, in the junior part of this category, which surprised nobody and gratified their teacher - Sheila Nelson, who is a sort of one woman centre of excellence for string players in London in the same way that Eta Cohen is in the North. Another of Sheila's groups, the Gould Quintet, were highly commended in the chamber music class.

There were 22 chamber groups - all of the highest possible standard. Other classes covered, over the three days of the festival, just about every other kind of music group you can think of. The culminating event was once again "Youth Orchestra in Concert" on the Saturday night, given by a selection of the county youth orchestras which are the jewels in the crown of British youth music.

A festival like this - especially one driven along by a constantly questioning director like Larry Westland - has no end. The "youngest year" of the festival is almost

limitless horizons, and audiences this year were well up on last. There is the possibility in future of a class which caters more specifically for music theatre. At present you see, in almost every festival category, groups which are using creative techniques of presentation with movement and sometimes drama, and it may well be appropriate to give them a proper category in which to work.

Larry is also in the early stages of planning a solo class for flute next year, to tie up with the "Music for Youth Prize" run by the European Union of Music Competitions for Youth. If this plan - and this is its first public mention - comes to fruition, the winner of a solo flute class next year will travel in the autumn to Belgium to compete at European level. Young flautists and their teachers would do well to watch for news of this development as the year goes on.

One class which I have seen grow from modest beginnings is "Voices in Concert". The earlier absence of

choral music from the festival was a recurrent complaint. When "Voices" started, it was not at first clear where the emphasis was going to lie and at one time it looked as if movement and drama might start to take over at the expense of choral excellence. Some judicious direction of entries into other categories, however, left us last Friday evening with a full blown choir competition. A measure of standard is

seen in the way that Barbi Hankinson's excellent choir, which has won numerous prestigious competitions in the North, did not figure in the awards. They are a young group, though, with lots of potential, and we shall see them again.

Our old friends from Holmfirth High School won one of the outstanding performance awards in this class. The other, and the top silver jubilee award, went to the Penweddig school choir, principally as the result of their singing of a group of Welsh songs. Their conductor, Gaenor Hall, is an engaging lady who radiates quietly but in a very real way her love of language and music. She has communicated those feelings to her choir in such a way that all who heard them on Friday were something very special and magical - a moment to be lingered over in the mind for a long time to come.

Simon Johnson, in his adjudicator's comments, said that it was "a communication from the heart to the heart". It was exactly that, and to sit in the Queen Elizabeth Hall and be touched with gentleness and love by Gaenor and her beautiful choir was a rare privilege. One of their songs finished with the couplet,

"Cyffwrdd fflam
Dy sbryd ein gwad"
which translates as "Let the flame of thy spirit touch our hearts". This could well stand as a motto for Penweddig school and its music, and for the festival as a whole.

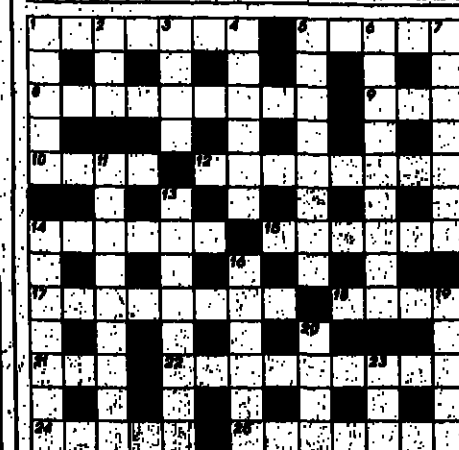
Gerald Haigh



The young string players who competed in the chamber music class achieved the highest possible standards.

Musical space invaders

No 110 CROSSWORD by Rufus



Across
1 Delivered that day new
10 A. American (7)
11 A. French (5)
12 A. French (5)
13 A. French (5)
14 A. French (5)
15 A. French (5)
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Down

1 Off-peak call (5)
2 A. positive measure
3 Every variety of ache
4 Minor offences (6)
5 There's not much that's
to his credit, presumably (6)
6 A. French (5)
7 A. French (5)
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Due to a production
mistake last week
we published the
wrong crossword.
Crossword No 110
is published for this
week, to make
amends, we are
publishing that
crossword again.



THE FESTIVAL OF MUSIC FOR YOUTH is a joint venture of the British Youth Music Council and the European Union of Music Competitions for Youth. It is held annually in the Royal Festival Hall, London, in July. For more information, contact the British Youth Music Council, 10, St. James's Place, London W1A 1AB.